

Hammer Horror™



the Films the Facts the Faces from the Studios that Dripped Blood

£2.50
US \$5.25

**FIRST
ISSUE**

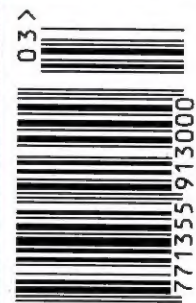
Christopher Lee
**The Curse of
Frankenstein**

Peter Cushing
the Hammer
years



**THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO
CLASSIC HORROR BEGINS**

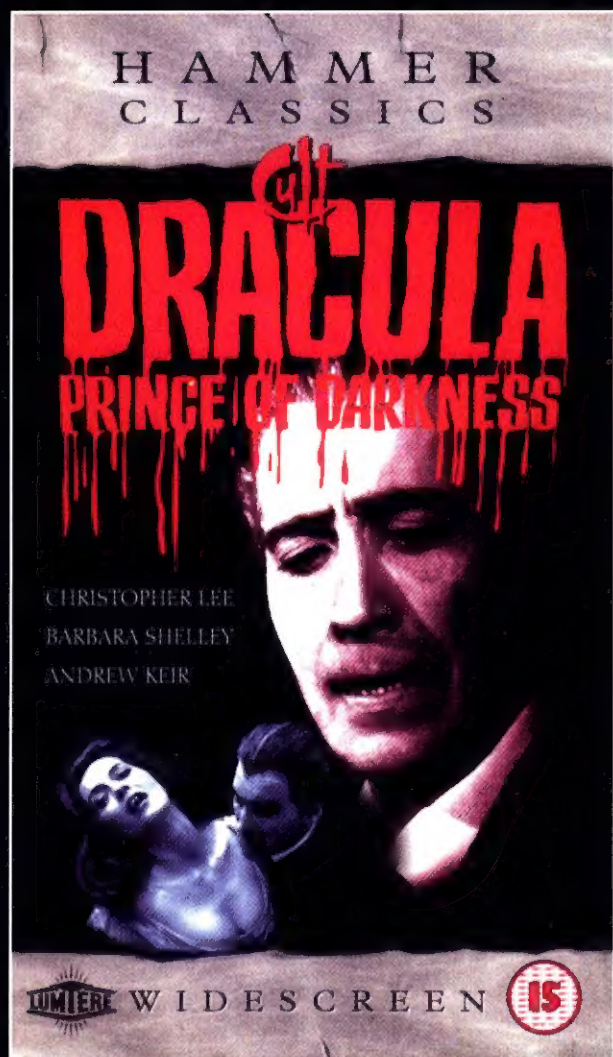
MARCH



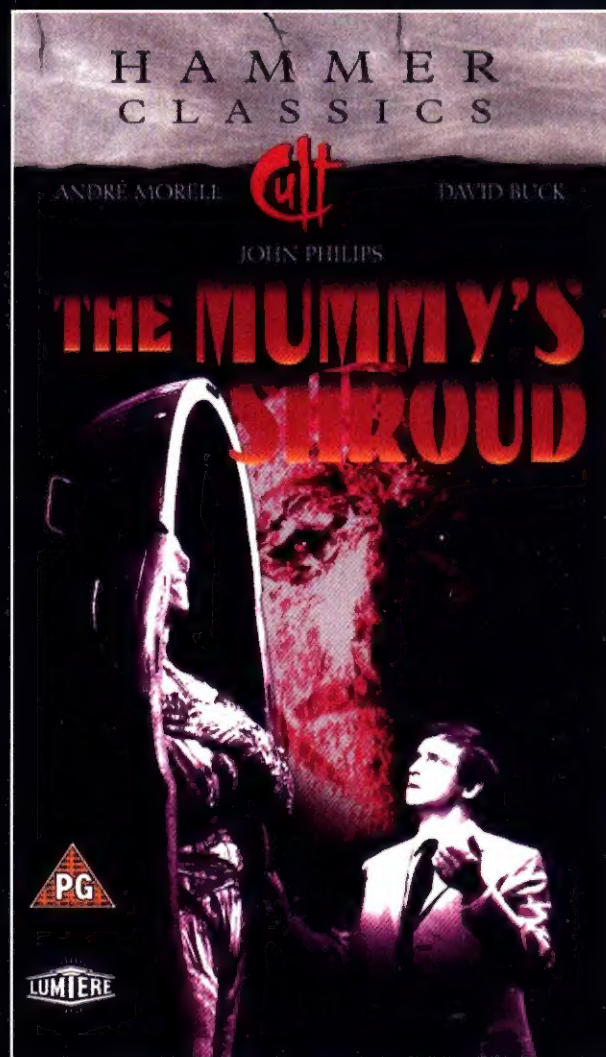
ON VIDEO
FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER



The Uncut Hammer Classics



DRACULA PRINCE OF DARKNESS
(WIDESCREEN)
£12.99



THE MUMMY'S SHROUD
£10.99

ON SALE 27th FEBRUARY

CREDIT CARD HOTLINE - 0171 491 8534
LOOK OUT FOR RASPUTIN THE MAD MONK AND FRANKENSTEIN CREATED WOMAN
ON SALE 24th APRIL

The Best of Hammer Horror from The House of Lumiere



Editor
Marcus Hearn

Designed by
Peri Godbold

Editorial Director
Paul Neary
Group Editor
Gary Russell
Art Director
Helen Nally
Logo design by
Simon Christopher

Production
Mark Irvine
Irfan Yunis

Consultant
Stephen Jones

Thanks to
Hammer Film Productions Ltd
Jane Herd
Graham Skeggs
The British Film Institute
The Tony Hillman Collection
Lumiere Pictures Limited
Tim Hammond
John Herron
Little Shoppe of Horrors
Richard Klemenson
Adrian Rigelsford
Ian Scoones
and
The British Fantasy Society

Hammer Horror #1. Published by Marvel Comics UK Ltd. Chairman: Jim Gallon. Managing Director: Mike Hobson. Office of publication: 13/15 Arundel Street, London WC2R 3DP, England. Tel: 071-497 2121. All copyright in and to films, characters and stories used herein is owned by, controlled by, or licensed in conjunction with Hammer Film Productions Limited. All reproduction or use of the same without the express permission of Hammer Film Productions Limited is strictly forbidden. All other material is © Marvel Comics Ltd unless otherwise indicated. No similarity between any of the fictional names, characters, persons and/or institutions herein with those of any living or dead persons or institutions is intended and any such similarity is purely coincidental. Nothing may be reproduced by any means in whole or part without the written permission of the publishers. This periodical may not be sold, except by authorised dealers, and is sold to the condition that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. All letters sent to this magazine will be considered for publication, but the publishers cannot be held responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, photographs or artwork. Printed in the UK and distributed by Marketforce (UK) Ltd, 247 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0AL 071-261 8585. ISSN 1355-9133

Hammer Horror

the Films the Facts the Faces from the Studios that Dripped Blood



Photo The Journal of a Ghastly Hunter by Simon Marsden Little Britain set page 38 for detail

The bad press horror films receive isn't entirely undeserved. However, the genre's more recent extremities need not obscure its past glories. Images from directors such as Murnau, Hitchcock and Polanski are all too easily forgotten by those whose definition of horror is something altogether more disposable.

Of course, any appraisal of the genre's illustrious past will inevitably arrive at the house of horror itself – Hammer Films. As readers of our *Collectors' Special* issue will already know, this year marks the fortieth anniversary of *The Quatermass Xperiment* – the groundbreaking film that set Hammer on the road to becoming one of the most important independent studios in the world, and this country's foremost producer of horror films. We have joined forces with Hammer to produce a magazine that, month by month, will build into a definitive history of the studio and its classic horror movies. The result of unprecedented research, and the exclusive cooperation of Hammer themselves, is a magazine that celebrates the best in what late-night television was invented for.

Hammer films, while remaining the subject of our pull-out centre sections, will not totally dominate our pages. Future issues will examine the work of companies such as Amicus, Tyburn, Planet and the hundreds of films that meant 'horror' before a certain chainsaw massacre and a particular exorcism. We'll also be keeping a careful eye on the current renaissance of Gothic cinema and all the latest in quality horror films and literature.

Welcome to our first full-colour celebration of those dank tombs, dark corridors and deserted graves that served as backdrops for some of the most memorable moments in cinema history.

Marcus Hearn
editor

Contents

- 4 Hammer Network**
Where are they now?
- 5 Peter Cushing – The Hammer Years**
"The most frightening things in the world are not what we see but what we imagine."
- 11 Peter Cushing O.B.E. – A Tribute**
A sentimental farewell.
- 12 Queen of the Horrors – the Hazel Court interview**
"I turned purple when I saw *The Silence of the Lambs*."
- 16 Gothic**
An appraisal of Ken Russell's challenging *Mary Shelley* picture.
- 19 The Resurrectionists**
"Shelley's *Creature* was made animate through genuine beliefs and principles of the day."
- 20 Frankie Goes to Hollywood**
The Universal monster mash.
- 21 The Curse of Frankenstein**
Cast and Credits
The Characters
The Story
In Production
Casting
Making the Monster
Shooting
The Trailer
On Release
Comment
Critique
Classic Scene
- 34 I Was a Teenage Frankenstein – the Melvyn Hayes interview**
"I've come full circle – I've played the youngest Frankenstein in the world, and now the oldest!"
- 36 Early Hammer – Four Sided Triangle.**
A prototype for Hammer horror from the men that later gave us *The Curse of Frankenstein* and *Countess Dracula*.
- 38 Blood Lines**
A round-up of the latest late-night literature.
- 42 In For a Hound – the Robert Urquhart interview**
"I'm still very ambivalent about the horror pictures, I really don't think they're the brightest sort of message to be doing."
- 44 Ghosts**
Christopher Lee's latest horror movie won't be appearing at any cinema – it's on CD-ROM.
- 46 Who Were Hammer?**
The Hinds and Carreras dynasties profiled in the first part of this series.
- 51 Next Month in Hammer Horror**
Coming attractions.

This issue's Contributors

Claudia Andrei 's innovative work has been seen in magazines such as *Vox* and *Skin Two*. She has illustrated covers for *Hot Press* and, most recently, *The Dedalus Book of German Decadence*.

Alan Barnes is an ex-television production manager currently changing an equally undistinguished career as a writer. He strenuously denies having played the little boy in *Whistle Down the Wind*.

Keith Dudley was the editor of the *Hammer International Journal* between 1980 and 1986 and has also contributed to titles such as *Fangoria* and *Little Shoppe of Horrors*. He continues his research on the behalf of magazines based in this country and the US.

Bill Harry originally began full-time writing by creating *Mersey Beat*, the seminal music paper of the sixties. Author of thirteen books, his features on popular culture are syndicated throughout the world. For some years he acted as PR to over forty major stars ranging from David Bowie to Led Zeppelin.

Stephen Laws is a novelist whose genre work includes *Ghost Train*, *Spectre*, *The Wyrms*, *The Frighteners*, *Darkfall* and *Gideon*. 1994 saw the publication of his latest book, *Macabre*.

Joe Nazzaro divides his time between this country and the US, contributing to such magazines as *Starlog* and *Starburst*. His latest bestseller is *The Making of Red Dwarf*.

Jonathan Rigby is an actor as well as a writer. His stage roles - here, on the Continent and in the US - include such questionable characters as Professor Higgins, Lord Byron, the Marquis de Sade and Count Dracula. His writing includes an epic stage adaptation of *Dracula* which is soon to be revived.

Hammer Network

by Bill Harry

Hammer Films was noted for its ensemble of actors, actresses, screenwriters, directors, producers and technical staff. The frequent use of such a wide range of talent working together made the 'Hammer family' extra special. The legion of fans worldwide who were inspired and entertained by the Hammer movies included prominent directors such as Steven Spielberg, Joe Dante and Francis Ford Coppola. Almost two decades following the company's peak years, enthusiasm still runs high and there are thousands of fans who look forward to the promising future which beckons with the new revival of Hammer Films. *Hammer Network* will present news and personal stories of the original Hammer stars and technicians, together with information on the collectors, fan clubs and fanzines, memorabilia, fan club meetings and conventions.

We can't escape the sad demise of some of the players who appeared in Hammer films. The recently screened television documentary *Battersea Bardot* reminded us of the tragic end of Carol White, who appeared as Gido in *Slave Girls*, the 1966 production in which she received sixth billing (although Steven Berkoff, now one of our top stage actors, was billed directly above her!) She starred in her next film *Poor Cow*, which established her internationally, although she had already become almost a household name in Britain for her rôles in the television dramas *Up the Junction* and *Cathy Come Home*.

Carol made some unfortunate career decisions by turning down powerful rôles in movies such as *Women In Love* to appear in lacklustre parts in *Daddy's Gone-a-Hunting* and the like.

Tragically, she died as a result of alcoholism in September 1991.

On a more positive note the female co-star, Budapest-born Edina Ronay, who featured as

London with Lena Stengard under the name Edina and Lena. She eventually received acclaim as one of Britain's leading handknit designers and currently heads a major fashion company.

The male lead was Michael Latimer. Michael is now a stage director and drama coach at the

London Academy of Performing Arts in Fulham. He recalls Hammer with affection as the company offered him the rôle of David Marchant soon after he graduated from RADA (the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts). Hammer were pleased with his performance and offered him a future as part of the Hammer team of actors, but he turned down the prospect of further Hammer films in favour of joining the Royal Shakespeare Company, admitting that he'd been so poor he'd never have been able to survive on the low RSC pay, but the fee from *Slave Girls* was enough to support him for two whole years with the theatre company. Incidentally, before devoting himself to the serious theatre, he appeared in the *Angels of Death* episode of *The New Avengers* with Caroline Munro and Pete Walker's *Man of Violence* with Luan Peters.

Last but not least is the delicious Martine Beswicke, who co-starred as the evil Kari. Following her appearance in *Slave Girls* (the original title was *Slaves of the White Rhino*), she went to Italy to appear in *A Bullet for the General* and *Il Bastardo*, returned to England to appear in *Penthouse* and was then given her second starring rôle by Hammer in *Dr Jekyll & Sister Hyde*.

She next did some

modelling, but found that there wasn't much acting work in England and as Hammer seemed in decline she moved to Italy. She appeared in several films there, then received an offer to star in Oliver Stone's debut movie *Seizure* as the Queen of Evil. Stone had noticed her in *Dr Jekyll & Sister Hyde*. Martine then moved to America where she has been appearing regularly on television and in films.

We'd like to hear from anyone who may have something to contribute to our pages. Information about the current whereabouts of Hammer luminaries and details about fan societies and meeting points should be sent to the editorial address (printed on the previous page) care of 'Hammer Network'.

Anybody with interesting collections or memories they would like to share should contact the editor at the same address. Finally, any opinions about the magazine and suggestions for future articles would also be welcome - please mark correspondence 'Hammer Letters'.



Martine Beswicke in *Dr Jekyll and Sister Hyde*, the film that brought her to the attention of Oliver Stone.



Michael Latimer and Edina Ronay in Hammer's *Slave Girls*.

Saria, is one of London's most successful fashion designers. Following *Slave Girls* (known in America as *Prehistoric Women*), she became a designer, specialising in handknitted sweaters and opened a stall in Antiquarius Antique Market in

PETER CUSHING— THE HAMMER YEARS

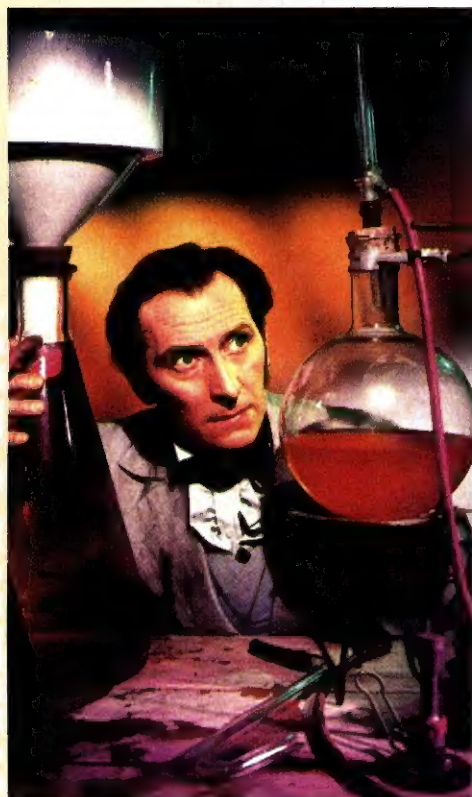
The passing of **Peter Cushing** last year robbed the nation of one of its best-loved stars and horror enthusiasts everywhere of one of their most respected icons. Using quotes the actor gave between 1973 and 1994, we recount some of the most memorable images and opinions of a man better qualified than most to claim “a good fright never hurt a healthy person . . .”



I believe in both the characters I portray and in the weird and uncanny games they get up to. I have to believe – that is the only way I prevent myself and my pictures being laughed out of the cinemas. By believing in what I’m acting – as an actor should do, whatever his part – I am able to give greater credulity to the character and the picture and so strike the necessary note of authenticity to capture the audience’s true attention.”

Peter Cushing

"Today's generation say they prefer the Hammer pictures because they left a great deal to the imagination. There was no foul language, no gratuitous violence and, in the end, good always triumphed over evil."



"At the time there was quite a strong rivalry between the film and television companies. The film people did not really want to employ anyone associated with television and vice versa. The exception, however, was Hammer Films. In 1956 I was reading the various trade papers and read that Hammer were preparing to film *Frankenstein* in colour. Having seen the original James Whale version and loved it, I telephoned my agent and said 'As I now have some spare time this is something I would like to do, are Hammer interested in my services?' They were, it was, so that is how it all began."



"The view of the characters I played helped me a great deal in getting to grips with Mary Shelley's creation. In order to give some sort of credibility to Victor Frankenstein's nefarious deeds, which became more and more bizarre, and he more and more ruthless, as the script writers burnt the midnight oil in their efforts to ring the changes, I needed to hold on to his basic motivation. The script writers did their best with variations on the same theme, but Miss Shelley's original conception reigns supreme. Her finished masterpiece must have given her quite a turn when she re-read it for, in her own preface to a revised edition of her novel, she questioned 'How I, then a young girl, came to think of, and to dilate upon, so very hideous an idea?' "

"Frankenstein is not evil," Peter once said, "but a man obsessed by what he is trying to achieve by any means that will justify the ends."



"Cushing could walk through the Frankenstein part blindfolded by now, but he still treats it seriously as though he were playing Hamlet." Variety said of his performance in 1967's Frankenstein Created Woman.

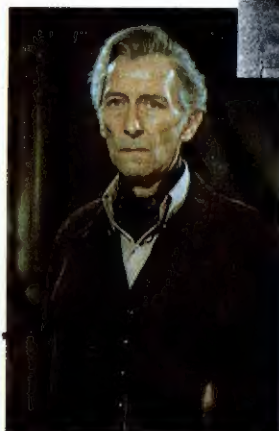
"In the original script, Van Helsing was sort of like a salesman for crucifixes; he was pulling them out of every pocket. He was giving them to children to protect themselves, putting them in coffins and so on. At the end of the film, he pulled out another one so I asked if we couldn't do something exciting instead. I remembered seeing a film years ago called *Berkeley Square* in which Leslie Howard was thought of as being the devil by this frightened little man who suddenly grabbed two big chandeliers and made a sign of the cross with them. I remembered that this had impressed me enormously. I suggested the run along the refectory table to jump onto the curtains and hit Dracula square in the face with the sunlight. He would, of course, be trapped, then I would come along like a hero, grab the two candlesticks, make the cross with them in his face. They agreed. Originally, the candelabras they had were the type with four candles on each base. You could tell what I was doing, but it didn't look like a cross. They changed to the ones you see in the film. At least it wasn't another crucifix coming out of my pockets."



"Van Helsing was sort of like a salesman for crucifixes," Peter cheerfully recalled.

"You would not believe how difficult I found it to strike a stake smartly on top of its head, as I was so often called upon to do as Professor Van Helsing, Dracula's arch-enemy. The Professor carried his whole caboodle of vampire-extermination kit in a small Gladstone bag, so out of necessity the essential mallet couldn't be very big. I would have liked one similar to those wielded by sturdy young locals anxious to impress their lasses by walloping the 'TEST YOUR STRENGTH - HIT THE

GONG!' contraption at country fairs but, as sure as 'eggs is eggs', that would have got laughs in quite the wrong places. Even now the knuckles of my left hand, which held the wooden spike in place, still bear the scars of many a miss."



"I read the book when I knew I was going to play the character . . . and discovered that Stoker had described him as a little old Dutchman with a bald head and sporting a small beard. Therefore, all the production team got

together and decided that it would be better to inject more vigour into the character. So I played the part more or less as myself."



Peter as Professor Van Helsing, arming himself with the knowledge necessary to combat his arch-nemesis in *Dracula* AD1972.



The Brides of Dracula

Technicolor (R) (D)

Starring PETER CUSHING

Also Starring FREDA JACKSON

MARTITA HUNT YVONNE MONLAURE

A HAMMER FILM PRODUCTION. A UNIVERSAL-INTERNATIONAL PICTURE
RANK FILM DISTRIBUTORS LTD

"I feel extremely lucky to be associated with the Hammer success story. I have done an average of one-and-a-half films a year for one company; in any actor's life, that is something to be deeply grateful for."



"Many people had said [I] ought to play Sherlock Holmes and when I was offered the part I was absolutely thrilled. It's a marvellous opportunity when you've got so much detail to base your character on. It's a very difficult part to play because he's so... he goes up and down like a yo-yo. You've got to be awfully careful when you play a part like that it doesn't become annoying to the audience. To have played that character is, I think, an answer to most actors' dreams.

My first spell of duty as Sherlock Holmes occurred when the Hammer production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* was made. Tony Hinds, the producer, said how professional I was to have lost weight especially to portray the gaunt detective. I'm afraid I hadn't been as conscientious as all that – 'it was Spain what done it!' – I'd been out there making *John Paul Jones*, and a bout of mild dysentery had fined me down."



"He was very shy and a little inarticulate, but he had such great feeling for whatever subject he was doing. He did his homework, which is so important. He knew exactly what he needed to do each day. Having been an editor before he became a director, he knew how to save time and money, because he had it all worked out the day before. It was a marvellous help to everyone."

Terence Fisher directed *The Mummy* and Bernard [Robinson] conjured up some exquisite Egyptian interiors for the prologue, glistening with gold and other luminous colours.

When I saw the posters advertising the film I noticed that Christopher Lee, who was playing the name part, had a large hole in his diaphragm with a beam of light passing through it, which was never referred to in the script, so I enquired how it got there. 'Oh' said the publicity man, 'that's just to help sell the picture.' Oh, I thought – that's just not on.

John Banning (my part) was attacked by Kharis, the mummy, so I asked Terry if I could grab a harpoon hanging on the wall of Banning's study and during the struggle for survival, drive it clear through my opponent's body. And that's what I did, thus giving some sort of logic to the illuminated gap depicted on the posters. Christopher was pleased, too – he said it made a nice change from stakes."



"That film was really something – it was based on *Doctor Syn*, but the name couldn't be used in the film or on the credit because Walt Disney at that time was making a film with the title of *Doctor Syn*. We used the old church [just outside Bray Studios] as it was due for demolition and had been deconsecrated. It was a beautiful little church, a great pity that it had to be pulled down for some kind of modern development."



Peter as Doctor Blyss – a man with a sinister secret.



Christopher Lee as Professor Meister threatens Peter as Dr. Namaroff in 1964's *The Gorgon*.

"In Rider Haggard's *She* I had to ride a camel. Now that is a mode of transport I do not recommend to the uninitiated, especially when that capricious quadruped takes it into its mulish head to sit down and/or get up, which was all too often in my experience.

That was not an achievement which has proved handy in later life as I cannot quite see myself perched perilously on top of a hump, jogging down Whitstable High Street to The Tudor Tea Rooms for an afternoon snack, shopping-bag clenched between my teeth. Anyway, where would I park the brute?"

SHE



Peter, with Rosenda Monteros, on location in Israel for *She*. Map-reading was the least of his problems.

"Namaroff was not a neurotic raving villain, but a reserved thinking man – shy, retiring, rather sad and without much to say. Yet he has the power to collect and sustain around him an aura of undiluted menace.

Namaroff sends a cold shiver down your back.

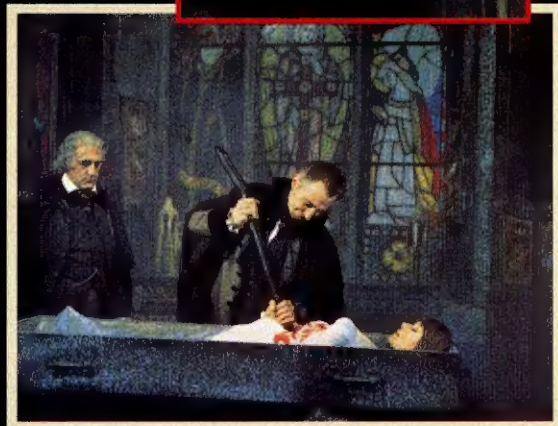
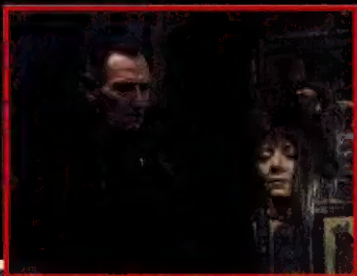
The most frightening things in the world are not what we see but what we imagine. There is a school of thought which suggests that everything the human mind is capable of imagining is in some way possible. An actor who suggests menace is thus keeping his audience on the edge of the possible.

Indeed, the duller parts of the so-called terror films, to my mind, are those when

the gory details are revealed; the best parts are those when we are suggesting what may happen, what may lie behind the closed door or inside the thoughts of a misdirected though well-intentioned mind. As we know, Hitler was well intentioned – all hell is paved with good intentions."

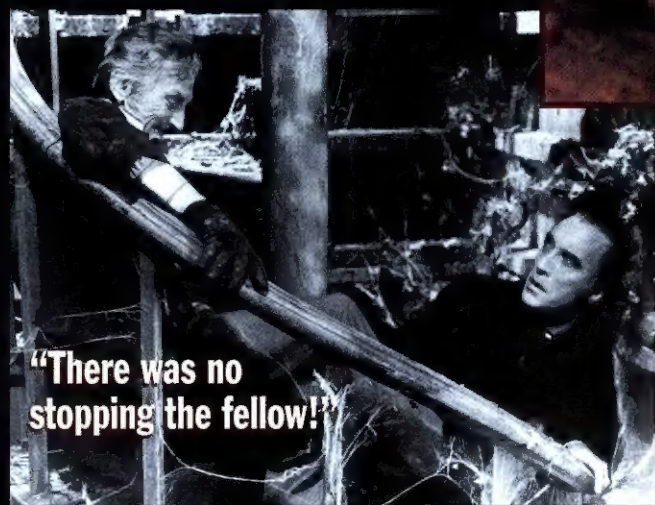
THE GORGON

"I carried out a neat job or two myself, to send others packing into that far, far better land that awaits us all if we're good: like lopping off Ingrid Pitt's head in *The Vampire Lovers*, a kindly act, actually, because she was suffering from some vampirish syndrome at the time, and apparently this was the only way to cure her of her nasty little habits."



"In *Dracula AD1972* I played my own father – or was it grandfather? – in a flashback sequence but, whoever I was, I conked out after a ferocious encounter with Christopher Lee's stupendous *Dracula*, which started at the top of a swaying coach and finished up in the mud when the coach overturned. One of the wheels had broken in half . . . I'm wondering if there might have been easier ways to earn a living."

Duelling with Christopher Lee in *Dracula AD1972*.



"There was no stopping the fellow!"



Freddie Jones gets the better of Peter in 1969's *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed*.

"Our film could not be compared to *A Clockwork Orange* and all its brutality, for instance. Audiences cannot identify with our characters. They are pure escapism. Our *Frankenstein* and *Dracula* films are simply fantasies. We are only out to entertain."

"These films are still showing and new audiences think they were made only a few years ago. People come up to me and say, 'Excuse me, are you Peter Cushing's dad?' I say, 'No, I'm his grandfather.'"



Frankenstein and the Monster From Hell – Peter returned as the Baron for the final time in Terence Fisher's last film.

"When you're dealing with these pictures which are dealing with the impossible, you have to believe in it and love it yourself if you're going to try and get an audience to believe it with you . . . That's the only way to approach any work."

Peter Cushing

PETER CUSHING O.B.E.

-A Tribute

When I sat down to write a tribute to Peter Cushing, I thought that it was going to be the easiest article I'd ever written.

Instead, it's become a terribly hard task. From my own point of view, it would take a good ten thousand words or more to produce something even approximating what I really feel, the debt I owe to him and the profound sense of sadness I feel about his passing. Peter was my main influence as a kid, and the reason why I became a writer of supernatural thrillers. (Okay, 'horror' if you prefer.)

I don't think that there's any need to launch into a retelling of Peter's career, or how his eventual association with Hammer Films and his partnering with Christopher Lee turned him into one of the great horror icons of the cinema. Like that other great horror icon who also sadly passed away last year - Vincent Price - his was a commanding presence on screen. His portrayals of Sherlock Holmes, Van Helsing and Frankenstein (to name but a few) were performed with a great sense of commitment and integrity. Instead, by way of tribute, I'd like to share my own personal experience with you.

My passion and enthusiasm for the horror genre really ignited in 1960. I was eight years old, and still remember two events with incredible clarity which started me on the road to a writing career. The first was a late night clip on some forgotten movie review programme which featured the chase and climax from Hammer's 1958 version of *Dracula*. As a chronically asthmatic child, unable to play sport and having to spend two months of every year in bed, it was easy for me to identify with this physically slight, intellectual Englishman leaping from banquet tables with athletic ease and forcing the Lord of the Undeath into the rays of the sun with two clashed candlesticks. The sequence electrified me, and is still burned deep into my psyche. More than anything, it was the incredible bravery of the character that so impressed me. The second event was simply this - standing in the rain outside our local fleapit, looking up forlornly at the poster for *The Brides of Dracula* and desperately wanting to be able to go inside.

My second novel, *Spectre*, not only features that fleapit cinema ('The Imperial'), but also has a dedication to Peter Cushing, as follows: "To Peter Cushing, whom I have never met but have greatly admired for many years; an heroic adversary of cinematic Spectres of all kinds". Following publication of the book, Peter got in touch to thank me, sent me a signed copy of his autobiography in return and a correspondence followed over the years. Can you imagine the feeling? To finally have succeeded in your writing ambitions, to be able to state your appreciation by dedicating a novel - and then to correspond with your childhood hero! If that sounds like a fannish response, then that's because it was just that.

It's been written elsewhere that Peter was a great gentleman, and I can only endorse that statement. He would never accept any suggestion that my success as a novelist was as a direct result of his influence on me. He would always turn praise around and insist that it was my own talents that had brought me that success. During that correspondence, we had one very interesting difference of opinion. He would never accept my belief that the use of the f-- word (among others) could be used legitimately in a novel (albeit sparingly) to serve a dramatic purpose. We discussed it at length, but he remained unconvinced. Stakes through the

heart? Fine. Heads lopped off? Good. Hearts torn out? Yep. Peter Cushing's the man. But profane language? Never. Peter Cushing, you see, was the true Gentleman of Horror.

His passing affected me as if I'd lost a member of my own family. Yet we had never met in person. He was a private person, very frail in his later years and his mobility was very limited by a nasty accident resulting in a broken hip. Something prevented me from intruding on his physical space - until last year. My writing business was likely to take me close to Whitstable, Kent, and I was keen to finally share a pot of tea with him in the Tudor Tea Rooms at Harbour Street. It was not to be. Sad too to relate that Peter's last professional engagement, providing a voice-over for Ted Newsom's Hammer documentary, *Flesh and Blood*, should be the first and last time we both might share a screen credit. (Myself as assistant director).

The people of Whitstable had really taken Peter to their hearts. If while walking on the street he might be accosted by over-eager fans, someone was always there to step in and guide him out of trouble. If someone should jostle for an autograph while he was lunching in the Tudor Tea Rooms, someone would be there to act as a polite barrier. Anyone looking at the newspaper photographs of Peter's funeral cortege passing down the main street might assume that a head of state had died. The streets were crowded with people paying their last respects. He was clearly a much loved man.

But putting aside the sadness, I'm sure everyone must know that in a very real sense Peter had been waiting for death ever since the passing of his wife, Helen, in

1971. He felt that he too had really died then, and was just biding his time until they could be reunited. He truly yearned for the time when they would be together again. A man of deep religious faith, Peter was profoundly convinced of this fact.

Well, that moment has come.

Thank you from the eight year old kid, standing in the rain and looking up at that cinema poster.

Thank you from all of us who have watched and admired your performances over the years - and thank you for the wonderful legacy of screen rôles that you've left not only for today's lovers of the macabre, but those to come.

Finally - the last words from Peter himself, in a letter to me from 1989, talking about his feelings on hearing he'd been awarded the O.B.E. I think this little extract speaks volumes:-

"I suppose I'm an incurable romantic, because I would have liked to have 'slain a dragon' (like St. George!) and saved the Queen's life, or done some other brave deed which would make me feel I really deserve this honour. But I love this country of ours and its people so very much, and am deeply proud of this recognition, because it must mean that I've done something during my life for it and for them. It means far more to me than any Oscar."

Peace and God's blessings, Peter

Stephen Laws

Reproduced with the kind permission of the British Fantasy Society. For further details send a stamped addressed envelope to: The Secretary, 2 Harwood Street, Stockport SK4 1JJ



Queen of the

Hazel Court, Hammer's first leading lady to make a lasting impression on the horror genre, is still fondly remembered for films such as *The Curse of Frankenstein* and *The Masque of the Red Death*. **Joe Nazzaro** spoke to the former actress at her Santa Monica home.

Almost four decades before Robert De Niro shambled his way through Kenneth Branagh's much hyped, big-budget retelling of the *Frankenstein* legend, Hammer Films were preparing to revolutionise the period horror genre with *The Curse of Frankenstein*. Starring Peter Cushing as the titular doctor and Christopher Lee as his misshapen creation, the film became an enormous success, and marked a turning point in Hammer's development.

For Hazel Court, who played Victor Frankenstein's fiancée Elizabeth, the film's success came as an unexpected, if pleasant, surprise. "Nobody ever expected it to be what it became," she remembers. "We all went to the premier in Leicester Square, and it was a hit from the word go, but none of us expected it to be quite like that!"

The Curse of Frankenstein also proved to be a milestone in Hazel's career, firmly establishing her as one of the genre's top 'scream queens'. From her appearances in several classic Hammer films to her later work in Roger Corman's Edgar Allen Poe adaptations, the actress rarely found herself out of work.

Now living in the United States, where she has become a sought-after painter and sculptress, Hazel was more than happy to discuss her former acting career. "My first film was *Champagne Charlie*, for Ealing Studios," she recalls. "I was 17. I went for an interview with Anthony Asquith, who was a very famous director back then. He saw some photographs of me, thought I was very photogenic, and asked me to come to London. He sent me to Ealing Studios for an interview, and the next thing I knew I had a small part in *Champagne Charlie*, alongside Tommy Trinder and Betty Warren. The next one was *Carnival*, with Michael Wilding, Bernard Miles and Sally Gray."

At this point, doors began to open. "The Rank Organisation signed me up after I made a big hit in *Carnival* and won some awards for Best Supporting Actress and Best Newcomer of the Year. I then got the lead rôle in *Holiday Camp* [1947], the Ken Annakin movie. He actually lives out here now and I've become very good friends with him again after all these years. He's 80 years old now."

For Hazel, landing the rôle of Elizabeth in 1957's *The Curse of Frankenstein* was pretty much a happy accident. "They just chose me!" she laughs. "I was under contract to Rank and I had made some other films, including *Counterspy* with Dermot Walsh and another called *Ghost Ship*. They were successful, so I think it was from that I got the film."

Horrors

Hazel has fond memories of both Cushing and Lee. "Peter was a charming man. Vincent Price was the same way, and Boris Karloff. You couldn't find anyone to say anything bad about Vincent or Boris. They were all wonderful human beings, and greatly loved, yet they all indulged in horror."

"Christopher Lee was always fun, with lots of stories to tell. We



Main picture: Hazel Court in 1964's *The Masque of the Red Death*. Above: Elizabeth (Hazel Court) lets her curiosity get the better of her in Hammer's groundbreaking *The Curse of Frankenstein*.

never had any problem – there was never any 'show time' from those actors. It was a job and you came in, did it, and you went home. It's not like over here [in the States] where it's almost as if histrionics are required."

The film established Cushing as a horror film icon, a label he never lost throughout his career. "It's true," Hazel agrees, "and Peter was never going to get out of it. He was a classical actor – in fact, the first time I ever saw Peter Cushing was in Shakespeare at the Old Vic. He was a classical actor and it's strange that his career took that turn. It's like Vincent, and even myself to some extent. Once you're in it, you're in it. There were other things I would have liked to do, and I did some things for television, but nothing big in the film world. You do get pigeonholed."

Hazel has vivid memories of *The Curse of Frankenstein*'s director, Terence Fisher. "He was very easy, and he always had a formula," she explains. "He had to do those films in a matter of weeks, which is laughable now when you think about how long the Kenneth Branagh film took. We rehearsed before, and you never got more than two takes. You worked together as a family, and there was no nonsense."

Hazel has no desire to see Branagh's *Frankenstein*. "I hear that it's a bore, and also it's all gone down the drain hasn't it?"

Two years after *The Curse of Frankenstein*, Hazel was reunited with Christopher Lee and Terence Fisher on Hammer's *The Man Who Could Cheat Death*. Anton Diffring starred as a 104-year old man who keeps himself looking young by undergoing a mysterious gland operation every ten years. Christopher Lee played the surgeon blackmailed into operating on him and Hazel Court played Lee's kidnapped lover. "We used to work from eight in the morning until eight at night," she recalls, "but nevertheless it was very well organised, right up to the last shot. Terry [Fisher] worked from a storyboard and it was all very relaxed and easy. I only remember fun and laughter."

"Anton Diffring was easy to work with. He was from the German

We used to work from eight in the morning until eight at night, but nevertheless it was very well organised, right up to the last shot. I only remember fun and laughter.



With Anton Diffring and Christopher Lee in Hammer's *The Man Who Could Cheat Death*, released in 1959.

theatre and always seemed distant; there was always a wall between you and he. He wasn't difficult, just distant."

Hazel had a starring rôle in 1960's *Dr. Blood's Coffin*, in which the misguided physician tries to achieve immortality by using freshly-transplanted hearts. The result is a rotting, undead, corpse, played by Paul Stockman.

"That was shot down the old mines in Cornwall," Hazel remembers. "Sidney Furie [*The IPCress File*] was the director; I think it was his first film. I fell in love with Cornwall. I'd love to live there; it's my favourite spot in the world. I have friends who own a wonderful small hotel, and I go back there every year."

Now established in the UK, Hazel decided to test the waters in the US. "I went to Hollywood and made four episodes of Alfred Hitchcock's series [*Alfred Hitchcock Presents*], including one with Denholm Elliot, one with Jack Cassidy and one with Lawrence

Harvey which Hitch himself directed.

"It was a golden time, and also when I did the horror films with Vincent Price. I was the Queen of the Horrors then!"

Directing Hazel in her trio of Poe-related outings was legendary low-budget film-maker Roger Corman. "He improvised quite a bit!" she cheerfully recalls.

"It's funny, I think it was while we were working on *The Masque of the Red Death* that he said 'I'm going to take a class at UCLA on the psychology of handling actors.' He would say 'I'm learning!' They were all early films for him but we had a great relationship."

In 1963, a year after doing *The Premature Burial*, Hazel appeared with Boris Karloff, Vincent Price and Peter Lorre in the light-hearted fantasy *The Raven*. "That was the most fun of all my films because every day the three of them would try and top each other. They would tell stories – Vincent would tell one, then Peter, then Boris would tell one and so it went on. I think that really comes through in the film, with the three of them trying to top each other with their tricks. We had a ball, and it never let up. If you look at *The Raven* now, it's even better than it was then. It's still very funny.

"Boris Karloff was charming, as was Peter Lorre. Peter talked to you as if you were the only person in the world, and I'm told that other women have said he actually had great sex appeal. He really did. He was very funny and had a marvellous mind. He wasn't very

well on that film but he still made us laugh with his stories.

"Of course, Vincent became my life-long friend. He was really responsible for my going into the world of art. That was his great love. He bought a lot of my work and encouraged me to study. Then the painting led into my sculpting, and he really helped me tremendously. Vincent was my mentor." In addition to Hazel and the triumvirate of venerable genre stars, the film also featured a young, confused-looking actor named Jack Nicholson. "Oh my God, in those pantaloons!" Hazel laughs. "Whenever I look at him now, I still see him in those green pantaloons. He didn't exactly wear them well. He was so funny. When he left the set at night he used to say 'I think I'll go back and write. I've got something in my head; I think I'll go do some writing tonight.' He was always saying that."



Hazel again worked with Vincent Price in 1964's Roger Corman film *The Masque of the Red Death*, shot in the UK. The film featured some stunning camera-work by future director Nicholas Roeg, as well as some controversial devil-worshipping sequences which promptly ran foul of the conservative British censors. While Hazel enjoyed being back in her native England again, it was nonetheless a strange experience. "I was 'half and half' at that point – six months in one place and six in another. I don't do that anymore. What actually happens is that you live your life in limbo because you're neither one nor the other, and although I've lived here all these years, my heart is still in England and always will be. I won't become an American citizen."

In the mid-sixties Hazel's acting career started to take a back seat to her new family. She still worked in television regularly but, for the most part, her film work ended. "I did some specials, and I remember doing an episode of *Mission: Impossible*. Right around that time I had a baby and I didn't work much after that. I devoted my time to my son."

Having made a conscious decision to leave the world of acting,

Hazel eventually found a new outlet for her creative energies thanks to her talent as an artist. "I've always painted, but not sculpted. If you told me when I was back in England that someday I'd be sculpting six-foot marble I would have said you were crazy. The painting led into sculpting and that became my career. "Being married to Don Taylor [the director of *The Savage Guns*, *Escape From the Planet of the Apes* and *Omen II* amongst others] and

having a son meant there was no time for acting. It's not the easiest thing, because it's very difficult to make money in the art world. It's tough, but I've had commissions and I've been very well received. I'm now doing a piece for the new \$12 million library that's being built at

We had a ball, and it never let up. If you look at *The Raven* now, it's even better than it was then. It's still very funny.

Penn State University, so that should be a nice commission."

The former actress concedes that a successful artist can easily be in favour one month and the next – "You're gone. That's when you paint or sculpt and your work has a gimmick to it, which is the way to success but it doesn't always hold. I do abstract work, but not so abstract that you don't know what I'm trying to say. You could look at it and say 'Oh yes, I know what you're trying to say.' I'm leaning a little towards realism now, but I think the word 'abstract' is so misused in the art world."

Pressed for any artistic influences, one name immediately came to mind. "I think Barbara Hepworth, the English sculptress, influenced me a lot. Oddly enough, I met her when I was making *Carnival*; I must have been 17 or 18 then. I was in Cornwall and they said 'Oh, you must meet Barbara Hepworth, the sculptor,' and it didn't mean anything to me then, not quite like it does now. I would give anything to roll back the years and have that interview with her again. That has always stayed with me, and the fact that she brought up a family – if you read her biography you'll see that she'd be changing diapers and sculpting at the same time. I kind of admired that."

Does Hazel ever have the urge to step in front of the camera again? "I must say I get a hankering every once in a while. I have a very good friend named Judy Parfitt, and when she comes over and she's doing a part it's very exciting. I think 'Oh, I wish I was acting again!' On the other hand, I love being master of my own craft."

For an actress who's so well known for her work in the Cinefantastique, Hazel is surprisingly harsh in her criticism of the genre's current state. "I'm very angry about a lot of it," she says of today's horror films. "Some of them are so horrible turned purple when I saw *The Silence of the Lambs*. I thought it was one of the most horrible films – it didn't need to be made. I'm surprised that Anthony Hopkins and Jodie Foster would even have agreed to be in it. You couldn't give me enough money to be in that film. I think they were very wrong."

Hazel's co-stars from 1963's *The Raven*. Boris Karloff as Doctor Scarabus, Peter Lorre as Doctor Beddo and Vincent Price as Doctor Erasmus Craves. The three genre icons were appearing together in a film for the first time.



EDGAR ALLAN POE'S



CLASSIC OF TERROR!

PLUS

THE STORY OF HITLER'S LOVE CAMPS

In one BIG all 'X' programme

See it at... **ELECTRIC TIVERTON**
Mon. Nov. 26th for 6 Days

very anti that type of thing. I'm also very anti-Pulp Fiction, which is going to be on everyone's list of their ten best films. I was totally revolted by it, and I left the theatre. I went to have an ice cream in the middle of it, and when I came back there was a group of kids about 10 or 11 years old sitting at the back of the cinema getting all

excited about the blood and violence. It's no good saying 'We've got to wipe out violence', and then you see something like this, and you really get angry. It's totally revolting. I don't see the point of going to the cinema, paying good money and having to have your hand over your eyes for a good third of the film. It makes no sense."

And what of Hollywood's current interest in producing new versions of classic horror films? "They keep coming," she says. "It's like *Hamlet* – people keep doing *Hamlet* and they always will. There will always be a new *Hamlet* and there will always be a new *Frankenstein*."

As for her own reputation as 'Queen of the Horrors' Hazel is pleased that movie-goers still remember her work, and that new fans discover her classic films all the time. "I still get a lot of fan mail, which is extraordinary – I think some of them still believe I'm 22 years old when they ask about my next film. I think it's wonderful though, and I reply to those letters because they say some beautiful things. They tell me how their children have been brought up to see the horror films and will keep going on. That's very rewarding, and I feel it makes it all worthwhile." ✚

GOTHIC

Ken Russell's typically audacious telling of the Shelley story stands as one of the most inventive horror films of recent years. **Alan Barnes** braves a dinner party with a difference.

"As long as you are a guest in my house, you shall play my games."
— *Byron*



Byron	Gabriel Byrne
Shelley	Julian Sands
Mary	Natasha Richardson
Claire	Miriam Cyr
Dr. Polidori	Timothy Spall
Murray	Alec Mango
Fletcher	Andreas Wisniewski
Rushton	Dexter Fletcher
Justine	Pascal King
Tour Guide	Tom Hickey

Director	Ken Russell
Executive Producers	Al Clark Robert Devereux
Producer	Penny Corke
Screenplay	Stephen Volk
Director of Photography	Mike Southon
Editor	Michael Bradsell
Production Designer	Christopher Hobbs
Costume Designer	Victoria Russell
Music	Thomas Dolby



The Story

Switzerland in the summer of 1816. On the banks of Lake Geneva, tourists through a telescope spy the Villa Diodati, wherein resides the notorious exiled English poet Lord Byron – “Mad, bad and dangerous to know.” At the villa, Byron greets his house guests – fellow poet Percy Bysshe Shelley (‘Shylo’), his wife, Mary Godwin, and Byron’s one-time mistress, her half-sister Claire Clairmont – and introduces them to his “menagerie”, amongst which he numbers his physician and travelling companion, Dr. John Polidori (‘Polly’).

After a dinner in which the conversation takes a macabre turn, fuelled by copious quantities of laudanum, an opiate, the group play ‘hide-and-seek’ upon Mary’s suggestion. The newcomers explore the house only to find a coterie of grotesques: pythons wrapped around suit of armour, a bellydancing automaton. As a fierce storm breaks, a tripping Shelley is to be found standing naked on the roof of the house in an effort to demonstrate that “Lightning is the fundamental force of the universe!”

Later, the group reconvene to read ghost stories to one another. It takes their fancy to each devise a ghost story of their own; Byron has a darker plan. Gathered around a skull, he moots a seance and instructs them all to “Conjure up your deepest, darkest fear and call that fear to form, to life.” Claire, a hysteric, begins to babble and collapses, foaming at the mouth, to the floor. She is taken to bed. Likewise, the party retire for the night, Polidori with a jar of leeches, Byron with a maid wearing the mask of his half-sister.

The storm continues to rage and, one-by-one, they are tormented by nightmarish visions. Mary sees herself molested by a hobgoblin, and learns that Claire is carrying Byron’s child. Polidori impales his hand on a nail, leaving the bloody impression of stigmata upon his palms. The narcoleptic Shelley meets Claire in the billiard-room, and sees eyes in her nipples. The atmosphere within the villa becomes filled with dread as the party begin to believe that they truly have summoned up some terrible creature which stalks them.

In the crypt, Byron, Shelley, Claire and Mary gather once more around the skull, attempting to banish this creature back whence it came. Terrified, Mary smashes the skull and nearly murders Byron, who she holds responsible for their ruin. Retreating back into the villa, she is granted visions of their respective fates; Polidori’s suicide, Shelley’s drowning, Byron consumed by leeches and her future self, indicating the corpse of not only the premature child she has already lost, but of one other, as yet unborn. She attempts to jump off the balcony, but Shelley drags her back down to safety.

Come the morning, the party recover over breakfast on the lawn. Mary tells of the idea she has for a ghost story, of a creature with an insatiable thirst for revenge, which will hound its creator to the grave. Behind them, twentieth-century tourists invade the grounds, crowding around the scene of the soiree which gave birth to Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*.

Background

Gothic began life as a spec screenplay from advertising copywriter Stephen Volk, and was quickly optioned by Virgin Vision after it crossed the desk of Al Clark, then head of production. “It was worlds removed from the scripts that one predominantly gets sent in this country, with their literary ambience and dependence on a sort of linguistic authenticity,” said Clark. “I felt it offered a perfect springboard to a director; the question was whom to approach. Then I saw *Crimes of Passion* . . .”

The director responsible for that, and a slew of equally vivid and iconoclastic features over the previous decades was, of course, Ken Russell. “I couldn’t believe it,” he wrote in his 1989 autobiography, *A British Picture*. “. . . here was an Englishman asking me to make an English film on an English subject by an English writer for an English company in England! The age of miracles was not dead. What was up? Where had Mr Clark been all his life? Didn’t he know I was unbankable, unemployable and unlovable? It seems not. When he offered me the job I said, ‘Yes, yes, yes,’ before he found out.” Russell adored the screenplay: “When I read Stephen Volk’s script it was as if I’d written it myself. It filled my mind with all the right pictures immediately, and that’s so rare. I knew at once that I had to do it.”

Budgeted at around £2 million, principal photography commenced in summer 1986 with a week’s location in the Lake District. Hampered by appalling weather – at one time, a pastoral *petit-dejeuner sur l’herbe* sequence was completed during a gale, prompting the assistant director’s immortal cry, “Nail down the swiss rolls!” – parts of the Cumbrian shoot had to be rescheduled.

The main bulk of the film was completed in and around Wrotham Park, a private stately home just off the A1000 Great North Road between Barnet and Potters Bar, Hertfordshire. All the *Gothic* interiors were found here, bar the crypt, which was specially designed and built in an out-house. Filming was brisk, with only one major mishap. The dining-room tussle between Byrne, Sands and Spall was supposed to end with Byrne’s sword flying out of his grasp and onto the floor. On the sixth take, the weapon flew through the air and its point smacked into a priceless painting; a Gainsborough. Panicked, Russell went in search of the owner, one Mr Byng, who was soon located in the billiard room. After an apologetic Russell had described the mishap, Mr Byng smiled, said, “Thank God. It’s only the second-best Gainsborough,” and returned to his balls. A fairly gruelling picture for 23 year-old Natasha Richardson’s debut – at one point she was smothered in spinach, doubling as nameless slime – she was well aware that the production was fraught: “considering the pressures of time

“Sex and death? That’s what it’s all about, isn’t it?”
– Ken Russell



and the nature of the subject, it's probably only natural that there has been . . . well, a certain tension." Julian Sands described himself as "happy to be engulfed" by Russell. The director himself has mixed feelings about the completed picture, feeling that it suffers from " . . . a monumental piece of miscasting and a hysterical pace." He's keeping Mum on the identity of the misplaced thesp.

The film premiered as the closing night gala of the 1986 London Film Festival, opened in the States the following January and in the UK on Thursday 26th February at the Lumiere, St Martin's Lane. Reviews were nothing out of the ordinary for Russell – sniffy in *Monthly Film Bulletin*: "As horror films go, *Gothic* is well planned, as knowledgeable of its content, as knowing in its imagery as any but the most unyielding academic should require. It has no clear or lasting merit; it is ludicrous, monstrous and vulgar, but such qualities are nothing new in this genre" – and pithy in *Variety*: "The thinking man's *Nightmare on Elm Street*."

A bizarre exercise in censorship was wrought upon the film's posters. The original, featuring a twisted hobgoblin astride a prostrate Richardson – itself adapted from the Fuseli painting – was deemed unacceptable by, amongst others, London Transport; the offending goblin was blacked out to leave only a silhouette.

Barely one year later, *Haunted Summer* appeared, covering much the same territory. Directed by Ivan Passer from the novel by Anne Edwards, this American effort starring Philip Anglim and Laura Dern failed as both documentary retelling and cinematic fantasy, and soon vanished without trace.

Several of *Gothic*'s prime movers would continue to work in the genre. Stephen Volk gave up his copywriting career and co-wrote William Friedkin's dodgy 1990 flick *The Guardian*, featuring Jenny Seagrove as a nanny who lives a secret life as a murderous tree (we are not making this up); he redeemed himself fully two years later with the surprisingly scary *Ghostwatch*, a BBC film about a Hallowe'en night television outside broadcast that goes horrifically wrong. Russell's next major project was a so-so adaptation of Bram Stoker's *The Lair of the White Worm*; more recently, he returned to Wrotham Park to make the BBC's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. He continues to be labelled an *enfant terrible* by lazy journalists half his age and twice as ghastly. Timothy Spall performed a nightmarish turn a year later in Palace's iffy *Dream Demon* alongside Jemma Redgrave, another junior member of the Richardson clan. And Julian Sands' promise remains just that, despite adding a stylish touch to the

fantasy *Warlock* and its sequels.

Gothic is currently available on VHS as a Vision Video release.

Critique

Mr. Kenneth Russell invites you to an evening *At Home with Lord Byron*. Undress optional. Drugs will be supplied. Please bring your own sexual peccadilloes and apocalyptic visions. Death will be in attendance. RSVP to Virgin Vision . . .

What to make of *Gothic*? Two quotations, both from Gabriel Byrne's fire-and-brimstone Byron; "Alas, I have no virtues" and "As long as you are a guest in my house, you shall play my games." Let's take the latter course. For *Gothic* remains an elaborate conceit, a parlour-game for the eyes. Its merit, its virtue is in the playing, the collaboration of the viewer in the visions of Volk and Russell; and, by default, the visions of the characters themselves. Impossible to objectify, near-impossible to summarise, it deserves, and probably revels in, its reputation as one of the archetypal "love-it-or-hate-it" movies. Maybe "love it or leave it" falls nearer the mark. A film for re-viewing, but never reviewing.

The script reads like a collection of stray thoughts, a dream dreamt at the verge of wakefulness. A myth told by and of writers – 'keep a notepad by your bedside, write down anything imagined the second you wake'. Ever tried translating the jottings you find in the morning? A shopping list by Salvador Dali. And what the bloody hell is Lord Byron doing swanning round in a house, surrounded by robots? That's the joy of *Gothic*, and the curse – you never know where you are. From the moment that Shelley takes his first shot of laudanum, nothing is for certain, and nothing is for keeps. Sensibly, Russell refuses to elaborate or point out the distinctions between hallucination, nightmare, insanity and the actual. There is only the night, there is only the storm: "An age of dreams and nightmares, and we are merely the children of the age . . ."

Of course it's not history. Of course the performances are overwrought and silly. Of course it's directed as though Ed Wood and Federico Fellini were alternating shots. That's *Gothic*. And *Gothic* is *Gothic* is *Gothic*.

D'you see?





the Resurrectionists

Alan Barnes traces the origins of the Frankenstein myth – here, at the Royal College of Surgeons and, over the page, at Universal Studios.

The real-life Frankensteins, like the driven Baron Victor, were men of cold science. Shelley's Creature was made animate through genuine beliefs and principles of the day.

In the late eighteenth century electricity was held by the sharpest scientific minds to be a chemical element, to be a fluid that flowed through wire like water downstream. The Italian, Luigi Galvani (hence 'galvanism') experimented in charging the dismembered limbs of dead frogs with electricity, hoping to – as Shelley aptly put it – 'infuse a spark of being into the lifeless.' The hypothesised connection between electricity and

organic life was picked up keenly by one Adam Walker, Percy Shelley's tutor at Eton, in 1799. Inspired, Percy's Oxford days were partly spent, according to his undergraduate chum Thomas Jefferson Hogg, experimenting with these forces. Shelley went so far as to mildly electrocute himself, "so that his long, wild locks bristled and stood on end." He postulated a network of many kites, to "draw down from the sky an immense volume of electricity, the whole ammunition of a mighty thunderstorm; and this being directed to some point would there produce the most stupendous results."

Mary would also be influenced by the work of Humphry Davy, a friend of her father's; indeed, when writing *Frankenstein* in Bath in 1816, she's known to have had a copy of Davy's *Chemistry* to hand. She based the character of Professor Waldman upon him. Davy's student, Michael Faraday, would be instrumental in disproving many of his mentor's beliefs in the 1830s.

Undoubtedly, the most spectacular, gruesome, even shocking results were achieved in London in 1803 by Giovanni Aldini, Galvani's nephew. On 17th January, before the gathered illuminati of the Royal College of Surgeons, he demonstrated upon the corpse of Forster, a hanged murderer fresh from Newgate. Attaching parts of the hapless Forster's body to a large battery, he succeeded in making the cadaver's jaw quiver, contort its muscles, raise and clench its right hand, and, to cap it all, open one eye. "It appeared," wrote *The Philosophical Magazine*, "... as if the wretched man was on the eve of being restored to life." Fifteen years later, Scots chemist Andrew Ure tried to go further still, believing that by stimulating the phrenic nerve, the vagus, and a cluster of nerve endings attached to the spinal cord, he would actually succeed in restoring life "in cases of suffocation from noxious vapours, drowning, etc." The body of another executed murderer, Clydsdale, was used; but, again, would only open one eyelid. "I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs," wrote Mary in her novel.

Peter Cushing was fond of comparing Frankenstein to Christian Barnard, the heart-transplant pioneer. Indeed, much of modern science and medicine isn't so far away from Frankenstein's vision – does not a defibrillator in a casualty unit use electricity to bring heart attack victims back to life?





Frankie Goes to Hollywood

"It's Alive! It's Alive!"

The dread name Frankenstein first appeared on cinema screens in 1899; the ten feet of 16mm silent film christened *Frankenstein's Trestle*, however, amounts to no more than a shot of a train crossing a bridge in the White Mountains, en route to a town called Frankenstein. A swizz!

The silver screen's premier dalliance with the Baron *verite* came in 1910; a silent featuring one Charles Ogle as the Monster. Directed by J. Searle Dawley, the Thomas Edison Co's *Frankenstein* was captioned "A Liberal Adaptation of Mrs. Shelley's Famous Story". A reviewer of the time said, "the scene in the laboratory in which the Monster seemed gradually to assume human semblance is probably the most remarkable ever committed to a

film." This milestone was considered lost until, as its 75th anniversary approached, a print was discovered in the collection of a Wisconsin movie buff who painstakingly restored all 14,000 images to their former glory. Sadly, the Ocean Film Corporation's 1915 *Life Without Soul*, directed by Joseph W. Smiley, remains lost.

Better documented than the 1910 version, *Life Without Soul* featured Percy Darrell Standing as the "Brute Man", sans make-up. *The Moving Picture World* of 4th December 1915 described his performance as "awe-inspiring, but never grotesque, and indicates the gradual unfolding of the creature's senses and understanding, with convincing skill." William Cohill played Frankenstein in a production which was apparently shot in locations as diverse as New York, Georgia, Arizona, Florida and on the decks of a steamship in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean!

Also missing from contemporary film archives is 1920's Italian *Il Mostro di Frankenstein* [sic]: *The Monster of Frankenstein*. Made by Albertini Film and directed by Eugenio Testa, one Umberto Guarracino wore the scars, with Luciano Albertini – possibly the company's owner – wielding the scalpel.

It wasn't until 1931 that a full-blown talking feature came about – the great Universal Pictures version, directed by James Whale, starring Colin Clive and William Henry Pratt, who'd thankfully adopted the stage moniker 'Boris Karloff'. Whale was partly responsible for creating the monster's distinct appearance, sketching designs based around Karloff's startling features. "I made drawings of his head, added sharp bony ridges where I imagined the skull might have joined," he said. Make-up designer Jack Pierce added the electrodes through the Monster's neck which completed the unique image, soon copyrighted by Universal; this would later prove problematic for Hammer.

The film added a few enduring myths to the Frankenstein legend; the abnormal brain, Dwight Frye's hunchbacked assistant. And the script, like almost all to follow, truncated Shelley's narrative, omitting the finale set in the frozen arctic wastes, depriving the Creature the power of speech. Quoth Karloff: "I always saw my monster as something inarticulate, helpless and tragic. To him, Frankenstein was God."

Perhaps even better was the inevitable 1935 follow-up, *The Bride of Frankenstein*. Beginning with Mary Shelley narrating a cop-out for the fiery finale of the original, it featured Ernest Thesiger as Dr. Praetorius, a mad scientist to end all mad scientists, forcing Frankenstein to build a mate for his Monster – the tonsorially-teetering Elsa Lanchester; another classic film creation. Basil Rathbone played Wolf Frankenstein in 1938's *Son of Frankenstein*, Karloff's last film-outing as the Creature. Lon Chaney Jr would adopt the rôle four years later in *The Ghost of Frankenstein*, and swapped to play lycanthrope Lawrence Talbot in 1943's *Frankenstein Meets The Wolf Man* with the original Universal Dracula, Bela Lugosi. By now, the misinformed American movie-going public had come to assume that 'Frankenstein' was the Monster. The next year's *The House of Frankenstein* saw Boris Karloff return – but

this time playing the villainous Dr. Gustav Niemann. Returning also was Chaney's *Wolf Man*, with the aptly-named Glenn Strange as the Baron's hapless, shambling creation and John Carradine as Stoker's vampire Count. The monster mash continued in 1945 with *House of*

Dracula, a film which again featured John Carradine as Dracula. Three years later came absolute confirmation of the Universal cycle's descent into self-parody – *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*. Lugosi played Count Dracula once more.

It was the end of an era, and time for something new . . . †



"The critics loathed the film, but it started the cycle and started, as it became known, Hammer Horror."

Michael Carreras





The Curse of Frankenstein

Cast and credits

Victor Frankenstein
Elizabeth
Paul Kremp

Creature
Young Victor
Justine
Professor Bernstein
Aunt [Sophie]
Grandpa
Little Boy
Priest
Warder
Burgomaster [Hermann]
Wife
Young Elizabeth
Lecturer
Uncle
Undertaker
Helen [Maid]
Mother
Schoolmaster
Kurt
Fritz
Father Felix
A Tramp
Second Priest
Stuntman

Peter Cushing
Hazel Court
Robert Urquhart
by permission of A.B.P.C.
Christopher Lee
Melvyn Hayes
Valerie Gaunt
Paul Hardtmuth
Noel Hood
Fred Johnson
Claude Kingston
Alex Gallier
Michael Mulcaster
Andrew Leigh
Ann Blake
Sally Walsh
Middleton Woods
Raymond Ray [J. Trevor Davies]
Ernest Jay
Unknown *
Marjorie Hume
Henry Caine *
Patrick Troughton *
Joseph Behrman *
Raymond Rollett *
Barilett Mullins *
Eugene Leahy *
Jock Easton *

Screenplay by

Jimmy Sangster
Based on the classic story
by Mary W. Shelley

Music Director
Music Composed by
Director of Photography
Editor
Assistant Editor
Art Director
Camera Operator
Focus Puller
Sound Recordist
Sound Camera Operator
Boom Operator
Continuity
Wardrobe
Hair Stylist
Production Designer
Production Manager
Assistant Director
2nd Assistant Director
3rd Assistant Director
Production Secretary
Casting
Make-Up
Stills Cameraman
Portraits and Publicity Stills
Associate Producer
Produced by
Directed by

John Hollingsworth
James Bernard
Jack Asher B.S.C.
James Needs
Roy Norman
Ted Marshall
Len Harris
Harry Oakes
W.H. May
Michael Sale
Jimmy Parry
Doreen Soan
Molly Arbuthnot
H. [Henry] Montsash
Bernard Robinson
Don [Donald] Weeks
Derek Whitehurst
Jimmy Komisarjevsky
Hugh Marlow
Faith Frisby
Dorothy Holloway
Phil Leakey
Tom Edwards
John Jay
Anthony Nelson-Keys
Anthony Hinds
Terence Fisher

A Hammer Production
Produced at Bray Studios
Executive Producer Michael Carreras

* Uncredited in finished print.
† Character unseen in finished print.

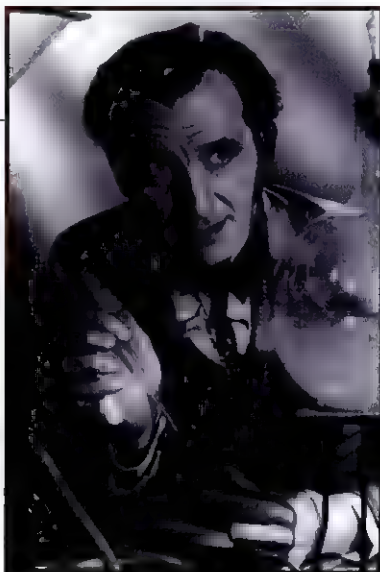
Names in square brackets indicate a documented title additional or alternative to that given in the finished print. Credit order taken from film titles, supplemented by additional credits from original press release.

Certificate 'X'
Duration 82 minutes, length 7,503 feet
Eastmancolour by Humphries Laboratories Ltd.
A RCA Sound Recording
Distributed by Regal Films International / Warner Brothers
Copyright MCMLVII Clarion Film Productions

THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN



The Characters



BARON FRANKENSTEIN

"I always had a brilliant intellect . . ."

Arrogant, driven, cold, callous, cruel, childish, and a blackmailing murderer-misogynist to boot, this Baron, far from rejecting his creation as Frankenstein's traditionally do, clearly adores it. He restores it to life once Paul has killed it, acts as its food taster, even blows it a kiss after it has tried to strangle him to death. The guillotine is no more than Victor deserves, but we're perversely pleased when he is ingeniously reprieved in the next instalment . . .

THE CREATURE

In its short and miserable existence, the Creature's every effort at co-ordination or communication is frustrated by the eruption of the homicidal tendencies inadvertently programmed into it. As a grisly mirror reflection of its father's darker impulses, however, this psychopathic streak is perfectly understandable. It is desperate to be put out of its misery, and is just awakening to a sense of its own human-ness when this finally, thankfully, happens.



ELIZABETH

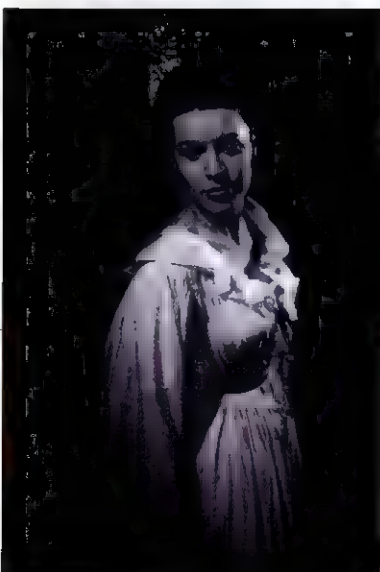
"I don't think I shall ever know what goes on behind that locked laboratory door."

Mistaking Paul for her fiancé on her first arrival, Elizabeth nonetheless doesn't deserve the grim courtship which Victor subjects her to whenever he has a spare moment. Anxious for a conventional domestic life, she is feisty enough, even so, to suggest herself as Victor's assistant – though the kind of assistance Victor has in mind is horribly specialised. Just as well, then, that she never even sees the Creature – never even suspects its existence.

PAUL KREMPE

"You cannot possibly conceive the dreadful thing he's proposing to do!"

The voice of scientific scruple and conscience. Paul expresses growing horror at the Baron's ruthlessness only to match it, effortlessly, when he refuses to corroborate Victor's outlandish tale. Having Elizabeth to himself is perhaps an ulterior motive. His personal researches, by the way, appear to have resulted in a rejuvenation drug – apart from one or two grey hairs he appears little older across a good two decades in Victor's company.



JUSTINE

"If you don't marry me, I'll tell . . ."

Justine is not only young and attractive, but also tragically typical of abused and credulous young women everywhere. After her ill-advised liaison with the loveless Baron, she is foolish enough to attempt to blackmail him. She is, however, pathetically unequal to his superior ruthlessness when he fixes her a blind date with the man upstairs . . .

The Story

"More than a hundred years ago, in a mountain village in Switzerland, lived a man whose strange experiments with the dead have since become legend.

The legend is still told with horror the world over "

A priest on horseback draws up outside a lonely mountain prison. Greeted by a warder, he is led through the gaol, past the catcalls of the inmates, to the cell of the murderer Baron Victor Frankenstein.

The condemned man is to be taken to the guillotine at dawn. The desperate Frankenstein has summoned the churchman in an eleventh-hour attempt to have the truth of his story heard, and the execution stopped. The reluctant priest settles down to listen . . .

After the death of his mother, the 15-year-old Victor inherits the family fortune, and responsibility for the upkeep of his cousin, Elizabeth. He appoints himself a science tutor, Paul Krempe, but within two years exhausts the man's knowledge. Together they begin exhaustive research and experimentation to one end: re-animating the dead. Many years pass. One night, they succeed in reviving the corpse of a dog using electricity.



Paul is eager to present their discoveries to a scientific conference in Berne, but Victor wants to continue, to go further, arguing that it is now necessary for them to build their own Creature – a perfect human being. Reluctantly, Paul concedes. They steal the body of a hanged highwayman from a gibbet outside Ingolstadt. Back in their attic laboratory, they discover that birds have pecked away the man's eyes and half his head. Victor decapitates the cadaver, destroying the head in an acid bath.

Following the death of her mother, Aunt Sophie, Elizabeth moves in. It soon transpires that Victor and Elizabeth's engagement was arranged by their families many years previously. Victor's experiments continue out of sight of the rest of the house. He reveals to Paul the hands of the recently deceased Leipzig sculptor Bardello. Paul can tolerate no more, and announces that he will help Victor no longer. He begs Elizabeth to leave, but she refuses to listen.

Unbeknownst to the both of them, Victor is having a passionate affair with the French maid, Justine. Rashly, he has promised to marry her.

Victor purchases a pair of eyes from the corrupt undertaker at the municipal charnelhouse. Wishing his Creature a brain with "a lifetime of knowledge," he invites the eminent scholar

Professor Bernstein to stay, carefully choosing his moment to push the hapless Professor headfirst from a balcony. After the funeral, Victor breaks into the vault containing the Professor's coffin and removes the genius's brain. Paul enters, and accuses Victor of murdering the Professor. They fight, and in the struggle the jar containing the brain is shattered against the wall. Paul returns to the house and begs Elizabeth once more to leave.

It is a stormy night. Victor finds that he is unable to use his laboratory equipment singlehandedly. He goes to ask for Paul's assistance. In his absence, a stray bolt of lightning starts the revivification process. The Creature's chest begins to rise and fall . . .

Alerted by sounds of breaking glass, Victor and Paul run upstairs to find the Creature alive. Unveiling itself, it attempts to strangle Victor. Paul smashes a chair over its head, knocking it senseless. They strap it down to a bench, but come the morning discover the Creature gone, escaped into the woods through the window. Armed, they set off in pursuit. In the interim, the Creature has attacked and killed a blind man and his grandson. Finding the Creature, Paul shoots it through the eye, killing it. They bury the body in a shallow grave.

Satisfied that Elizabeth is safe, Paul leaves the house for good. Unknown to him, Victor has returned to the grave, exhumed the Creature, and has it chained up in an anteroom to the laboratory. He vows to return and restore it to life. Later, Victor is confronted by Justine, who has only just discovered that he and Elizabeth are to be married. She is pregnant, and threatens to expose Victor's experiments to the village authorities. Seeking proof for her allegations, Justine sneaks into the laboratory after dark. Victor locks her in, and she is murdered by the revived Creature.

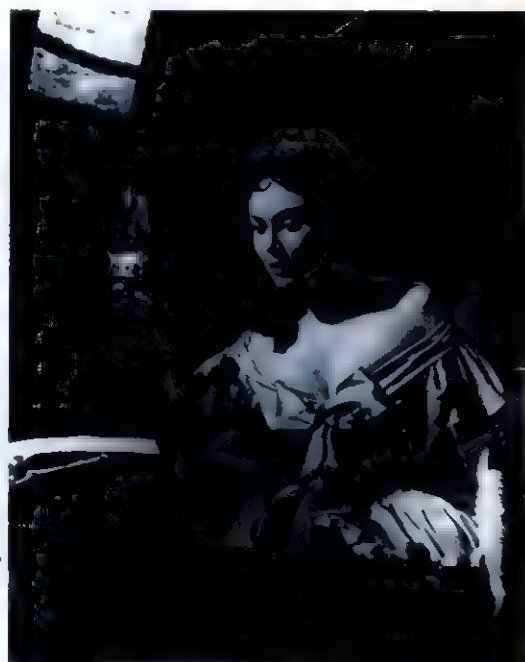
A week passes. Justine's disappearance is soon forgotten as Elizabeth's wedding plans proceed apace. Paul returns, and is aghast to find the Creature alive again, obeying Victor's instructions like a faithful dog. Paul highlights the shortfall of Victor's great plans, but Victor only swears to find another brain, and another, and another, until he has the perfect physical specimen. Paul determines to go to the authorities and inform them of his erstwhile pupil's crimes. Victor chases after him.

Disturbed, Elizabeth makes her way to the unlocked attic. The Creature has broken loose, and she follows it to the rooftop where it is sighted by Paul and Victor. Paul goes for help while Victor runs back through the house, grabbing a gun on the way.

On the rooftop, the Creature has seized Elizabeth. Victor fires, but only shoots Elizabeth through the shoulder. The hate-filled Creature advances on him. Victor hurls an oil lamp at it. Aflame, it falls through a skylight into the acid bath beneath.

Back in his cell, Victor's confession comes to an end. He receives a visitor, Paul, but his former friend refuses to validate his story. Victor will die for the murder of Justine. Paul is led away, and leaves the prison with Elizabeth.

Victor's time is up. he is escorted through the prison to the courtyard where Madame la Guillotine awaits.



In Production

**"Oh, where did it all begin?"
— The Baron**

From a whisper to a scream: 1956, and Jack Goodlatte, Managing Director of the ABC cinema chain, is one of the most powerful figures in the British film industry. That Hammer should remake *Frankenstein* was his suggestion, and one the small independent naturally took seriously.

Hammer's first version of Mary Shelley's story was also the indirect result of a script authored by Americans Max Rosenberg and Milton Subotsky, who would later found rival horror company Amicus. "I started Hammer in the horror business!" Subotsky cheerfully recalled. "After I did *Rock, Rock, Rock*, my first feature film, I wrote a screenplay for *Frankenstein*. We took it to a potential financier, and he said 'What do you guys know about writing horror films?' Anyway, he sent it to his friend James Carreras in England, and they [Hammer] asked us to make some changes, so we made some changes. In the end, they decided our script would be too expensive to make and got a new script from Jimmy Sangster! We got a percentage of the profits on *The Curse of Frankenstein*. I thought the film was terrible, but it made a lot of money and put Hammer in the horror business."

Initially planned as a cheap black-and-white production with the ageing Boris Karloff as the Monster, their plans stalled when US giant Universal Pictures raised the possibility of a lawsuit against Hammer should they use any familiar elements from Universal's *Frankenstein* cycle – most notably Jack Pierce's distinct and copyrighted Monster make-up. Hammer took up insurance against a possible lawsuit to a maximum payout of \$3,000,000, after assurances outlined in a letter from James Carreras to US partner Eliot Hyman dated 23rd August 1956:

1. "FRANKENSTEIN" by Shelley is in public domain.
2. If our screenplay is based on the book "FRANKENSTEIN" nobody on Earth can do anything about it and we are entitled to use the title "FRANKENSTEIN".
3. Whatever original ideas are added to the book are in order.
4. If we use any ideas in the Universal International pictures on "FRANKENSTEIN" then we are headed for trouble.
5. It is our intention that the script shall be as per the book backed by original ideas and having nothing whatsoever to do with the Universal International pictures, which puts us 100% in the clear.

Now geared up for shooting in Eastmancolour – the first British horror movie to be made in colour – Jimmy Sangster penned a new script entitled *Frankenstein and the Monster* bound by these very constraints.

The chosen director was appointed for decidedly pragmatic

**"I have never read
Mary Shelley's original
book, and I don't
think I ought to . . ."
— Terence Fisher**

reasons. "It happened that, under the terms of my contract, I was owed a film by Hammer, and the next one happened to be the *Frankenstein*," recalled Terence Fisher in 1973. "Hammer wanted me to see earlier versions of the

Frankenstein story, but I refused to do this, because I think everyone should bring his own individual approach to a subject . . . I wanted the film to grow out of personal contact with the actors and out of the influence of the very special sets." *The Curse of Frankenstein* was to be a milestone in a celebrated career.

Problems were encountered from Hammer's American partners, Eliot Hyman's Associated Artists Productions Ltd. The backers were very concerned that the film would suffer from a surfeit of Britishness. Hyman wrote to Carreras on 28th August 1956: "I don't believe we ever discussed cast, and when you use the expression 'competent British cast' you must bear in mind that there are British casts and British casts. You still have not told me what the cast

consists of and it is needless for me to point out to you that although the people themselves may be British, just how British are they by way of accent as the effect will be upon the acceptance of the picture in America . . ."

Replied Carreras: ". . . rest assured that the British cast will be absolutely first class and will have no trace whatsoever of a British accent . . . Now, whether you want Professor *Frankenstein* to be an American is entirely up to you, if so please let me have suggested names to play this part . . . In our budget we have only allowed £1,250 for this part, for which we would get a very competent actor but of course with no name . . ."

He already had that "very competent actor" in mind.

Casting

After repeated offers from Hammer for rôles via his agent, John Redway, Peter Cushing signed his contract for a four-week engagement as the Baron on 26th October 1956. "Hammer had been trying to get me for several years, but I'd been too busy with television," he said in 1992. "I got a break and knew about their plans to make *Frankenstein*, and as I'd seen the original with Boris Karloff and Colin Clive I really wanted to play the part, so I asked my agent if they were still interested. That's how it all started."

The contract required Cushing's billing to "come before the names of any other artistes, with no name as large or in larger type, in all credits and publicity within the control of the company."

More problematic was the casting of the Creature; giant actor Bernard Bresslaw was in the running, but Hammer had other plans. "They were looking for someone to play the Creature," Christopher Lee recalled in 1966. "They obviously wanted a very tall man, a man who had some knowledge and experience of movement and mime and who was able to act without speaking if necessary. My agent suggested me. I went up to see them and they said yes. It was as simple as that."

The 6' 4" Lee in fact shared Cushing's agent; undated, his three-week contract required that, "For any days on which the artiste is called for make-up and/or photographic tests, he shall be paid the full daily rate . . . The company agrees to provide a stand-in and to supply a double for any really hazardous work. The artiste agrees not to make any publicity announcement about the film until notified." In fact, Lee made a very early publicity appearance late in November 1956 when,

**"The first day I met
Christopher he was
disappointed that
he hadn't any
dialogue. I told him
'Consider yourself
lucky. I've read
the script.'"
— Peter Cushing**



at a reception in Brooks Wharf, Lower Thames Street, London, his sudden entrance in full make-up "made some of the 200 guests reach for their smelling salts."

Lee recalls the techniques he employed clearly: "In *The Curse of Frankenstein* the depth of characterisation was inevitably limited by the fact that I didn't speak. But, on the other hand, a certain walk, certain reaction, a certain thought going through my mind, was very important to the interpretation of the character. I had a damaged brain, so therefore I walked slightly lopsidedly; and everything I did as if it was forced out of me, as if I was unwilling to do it, controlled by someone else's brain – not my own."

Redhead Hazel Court took the part of Elizabeth. Born in Sutton Coldfield in 1926, Hazel had studied at the London Academy of Dramatic Art and thence worked in rep. Her first cinema rôle was in 1944's Ealing comedy *Champagne Charlie*, but it was Gainsborough's *Holiday Camp* three years later that made her a star, taking delivery of up to four thousand fan letters a week. In *The Curse of Frankenstein*, her 6-year-old daughter, Sally Walsh, played her mother's younger self – and not for the first time; having been paid pocket money and sweets for her previous appearances, she apparently demanded her own contract! 23-year-old Brummie Valerie Gaunt was cast incongruously as French maid Justine after producer Tony Hinds had seen her in *Chance Meeting*, a television play in which she was required to scream long and loud. *The Curse of Frankenstein* was a major break; second female lead in her first movie appearance.

Making the Monster

"To my mind, we were just beginning" – Phil Leakey

"H is yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of pearly whiteness; but these luxuriances only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same colour as the dun-white sockets in which they were set, his shrivelled complexion and straight black lips," was how Mary Shelley had envisaged her doomed Creature.

Restricted by the legal necessity to construct a Monster totally unlike Boris Karloff's 1931 copyrighted incarnation, Hammer turned to make-up designer Phil Leakey. Very much a pioneer in his field, Leakey created the make-up department at Bray Studios and was the first person to receive an on-screen credit for special make-up effects. He opted for a more biological, organic approach to the assignment. Early tests – of which there are many – included an animalistic design, akin to the beasts from H.G. Wells's *The Island of Doctor Moreau*. Eventually, after several rejected notions, Leakey was forced to improvise the make-up at the eleventh hour, the very evening before Lee was first needed on set. "They tried me out in a variety of unbelievable and, in some cases, totally irrelevant make-ups and tests," Christopher Lee recently recalled. "One made me look a bit like the Elephant Man – very unpleasant to look at and very unconvincing. The other was more like some sort of werewolf with the nose tilted up at the end to make you look slightly pig-like."

Working straight on the actor's face, Leakey built up a collage using



Phil Leakey applies a collage of wax, rubber and cotton wool to achieve the desired effect on Christopher Lee's face.

wax, rubber and cotton wool, once memorably described as looking "like a road accident." The make-up itself took two-and-a-half to three hours to apply. The pressure of time meant that Leakey was never able to make prosthetic mask-pieces of the face, as he recently recounted: "I think it was Peter Cushing who said 'Let's do a mock-up in clay to see what it looks like.' I used mortician's wax and started shoving it all over his face, adding a patchwork of various stitch-marks. It was really a trial to see if I could make it out of plastic and put it on fairly quickly." Much to Lee's chagrin, the Creature's face remained every bit as uncomfortable to remove as it was to put on in the first place.

The story that Lee was never allowed to eat with the cast and crew due to his character's horrific appearance is disputed: "We were all adults who knew this was an actor," remembers Hazel Court. Lee is not so sure: "... nobody was keen to eat with me, because the sight of me put them off their food. Hazel Court and Valerie Gaunt only did so under pressure from the publicity department," he claimed in his autobiography.



Hazel Court keeps her distance from an off-duty Christopher Lee. Producer Tony Hinds chooses to dine at another table altogether

At the time Christopher Lee's Creature was unveiled to the press (see Casting) Hammer were over-confident about his appearance. "They'd arranged a meeting in London for the press and various people and they thought it had all been fixed and settled," remembers Leakey. "They must have thought you got all these things out of your pocket. To my mind, we were just beginning, but they said 'No, this is it.'"



Shooting

Budgeted at a modest £65,000, the film was shot entirely on the Bray Studios lot, bar the few woodland sequences filmed at the Thames riverside nearby. The laboratory set was constructed on the main 40 by 48' sound stage. The night-time cut-



A classic team: from left to right, Terence Fisher, Hazel Court and Peter Cushing during production of *The Curse of Frankenstein*.

aways of the exterior of the Frankenstein house were shots of Bray's neighbouring Oakley Court; the main doors of the prison used the main entrance of the Bray house itself as a base. Camera operator Len Harris would use the comparatively new sharp-focussing Vinton/Everest TTL camera throughout shooting, despite initial objections from director of photography Jack Asher. The slow Eastmancolour film stock required the camera to be set at f2, the maximum aperture possible to allow the greatest amount of light, giving vivid and vibrant colour highlights.

The first scene to go before the cameras, on 19th November 1956, was the night-time sequence where Frankenstein cuts down and steals the body of the hanged highwayman from a gibbet. Stuntman Captain Jock Easton's services were required for this first scene, where he was suspended from the gibbet in an adapted parachute harness – perilous, as had Easton breathed out, the condensation would have



shown up in the cold night air. He'd also supervise Professor Bernstein's plunge from the balcony on to the marble floor beneath; a section of the floor was removed and replaced – apparently – by a small trampoline, covered in paper to match. Most dangerous was the climax of the film, where the Creature was required to be engulfed in flame and fall through a skylight into an acid bath beneath. Lee volunteered to perform the stunt. According to publicist Leslie Frewin, "Terence Fisher stared hard at him. 'My dear fellow [he said], I want to finish the picture with my Creature intact, not in hospital with broken ribs. We'll use a double.'" Easton was smeared in antflash paste before donning the Creature's costume, which was then covered in petroleum jelly. Nursing Sister Yvonne Parke of Putney, called upon to ensure Easton's safety, must have blanched at Fisher's insistence to smother Easton with "more – more" of the jelly. "I want him like a human torch – or rather – an inhuman torch," he's reported as saying. Easton only narrowly managed to fall into the 'acid bath'. "Don't let them tell you I wasn't scared," he said. "I was!"

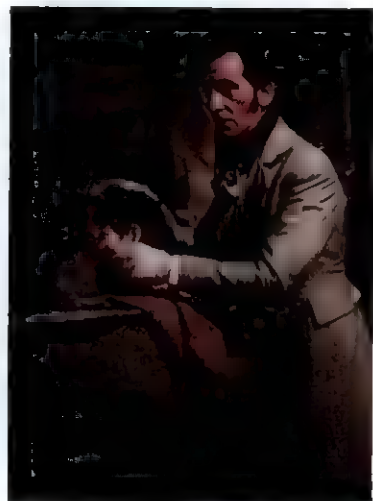
Colour filming would necessitate the replacement of one of the cast. Tests were made of a black-and-white puppy which would appear as the dog successfully revived in one of Victor's first experiments. Fisher pointed out that it was a colour movie, so a black-and-tan dog was found as an alternative. Star Robert Urquhart was pleased; he adopted the dog (christened – what else – 'Frankie') and would keep it for the rest of its life.

Despite his contract requiring him to undertake no "really hazardous work," Christopher Lee would soon find himself in uncomfortable situations. In the scene where Paul shoots the Creature, Lee had to smack a dollop of

Kensington Gore in the palm of his hand into his eye, then take it away, creating the illusion. Unfortunately, the gunge supplied reacted with his eye, causing him excruciating pain. "For an hour I thought I'd lost my sight," he later said. He was also forced to stand in the open air while hot water was ladled over him to suggest the newly-minted Creature's bandages 'steaming'. With snow on the ground, the hapless Lee froze. Tony Nelson-Keys brought him a bottle of brandy as consolation, but to no avail; the scene never made it into the finished print.

Other scenes were lost in the editing process. It's long been thought that a shot of the decapitated head dissolving in acid was included in the Japanese print; common practice in the less squeamish territories (it should be noted, however, that Fisher always disputed this). More importantly, Sally Walsh has recalled acting out a sequence in which Elizabeth Junior walks up to the coffin of the previous Baron Frankenstein. This possibly suggests that Victor was in fact to be the son of the scientist who first made a monster – and might also explain why Sangster's screenplay was set in the year 1860, and not in the 18th Century as per Shelley's novel. Some early publicity material seems to support this hypothesis; the synopsis given in the Regal Films

International press release claims that the Creature "... was the result of experiments he [Victor] had conducted from notes and formulae left by his father, the old Baron, who had been the creator of a former 'Monster'." Early cast lists, too, indicate a 'Mother' – Mrs Frankenstein perhaps. Several other characters and actors who never appear in the finished print are referred to in documents as late as release, lending further credence to the theory.



One of the key contributory factors towards *The Curse of Frankenstein's* phenomenal US success was the striking theatrical trailer produced to promote the film.

Extracts from the film's scenes were interspersed with the sensational narration typical of trailers from this era:

"This is Frankenstein, who revolted against nature, who experimented with the devil and was forever cursed . . . His unwilling collaborator was Paul Krempe . . ."

"Only two women ever entered this house of evil - Elizabeth, the lovely cousin who had promised to marry him, and Justine the maid who kept passionate and secret rendezvous with her master."

"Wicked, insane, evil - call Frankenstein what you will. A demon had made a man-made monster, and now the monster was the master."

**GET OUT OF THE WAY
IF YOU CAN**

**THE HORROR OF
FRANKENSTEIN IS ON
THE MARCH!**

On Release

"You should see that audience at the Warner," said James Carreras, describing the impact of *The Curse of Frankenstein*. "They squeal, gasp and shriek. Some of them even run out of the cinema in a panic. It's wonderful!"

The film premiered at the Warner Theatre, Leicester Square, on Tuesday 2nd May 1957.

Guests, including Peter Cushing, Hazel Court, William [Hammer] Hinds, Carreras *pere et fils*, were treated inside to a display of the Frankenstein laboratory equipment, adorned with skeletons and a life-size cardboard cut-out of Cushing holding a decapitated head - all set against a background of eerie green lighting and sepulchral music.

The picture performed extraordinarily well. After a record-breaking take on its first weekend at the Warner, the second weekend beat even that and resulted in the film running simultaneously at the Ritz, also in Leicester Square. In a letter to Eliot Hyman dated Sunday 7th July, James Carreras reported that "England is sweltering in a heat-wave and NOTHING is taking any money except the 'CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN'." A postscript to the letter simply suggested "DRACULA ???", a taste of things to come . . .

The real story, of course, was that of the staggering US box-office receipts.

Distributed by Warner Brothers, the returns exceeded seventy times its original production costs, and led directly to a deal with giant Columbia Pictures. Announced on Friday 6th September 1957, the deal involved Columbia putting up 50% of the finance for three forthcoming Hammer productions - *The Camp on Blood Island*, *The Snorkel* and a sequel, then *The Blood of Frankenstein* - in exchange for worldwide distribution rights. Hammer had joined the major league.

**Sensational Sequel to
'The Curse of Frankenstein' which is
smashing records throughout the world**



**The Blood of
Frankenstein**

In France, the film went under the title *Frankenstein S'est Échappé* [*Frankenstein Has Escaped*]; in Italy, *La Machera di Frankenstein* [*The Mask of Frankenstein*]. Certain shots can be seen in the background during a sequence in Stanley Kubrick's 1962 *Lolita*.

The Curse of Frankenstein remains a potential home video release; it has been widely available in the US for some years.

In the US, *The Curse of Frankenstein* was later released on a double-bill with the re-titled *Dracula*.



**FRANKENSTEIN SPILLS IT..! DRACULA DRINKS IT!
IN THE SCREEN'S GREATEST
DOUBLE CREATURE FEATURE!**



THIS GREAT DOUBLE-FEATURE COMING SOON TO YOUR LOCAL THEATER!

THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN

Critique

A film as startlingly innovative in its day as *The Curse of Frankenstein* could be forgiven for looking a little faded nearly forty years on, yet for most of its length this first of Hammer's gothic horrors retains its power. Though lacking some of the kinetic drive and sheer straight-ahead self-confidence of its majestic follow-up, *Dracula*, there are lurid shocks enough – together with a radical and grimly realistic re-interpretation of the Frankenstein myth – to leave multi-million dollar 1990s pretenders standing.

After some rather stilted scenes involving the adolescent Baron, Terence Fisher and his team embark on the steady accumulation of grisly detail for which the film was to become briefly infamous and lastingly influential. It is

impossible now to recapture the original impact of these charnel house delicacies, with the adult Baron presiding dispassionately over each new horror, absently wiping his

Frankenstein stumbles on an easy means of abortion when he delivers the troublesome and pregnant Justine into the hands of his artificial child.

blood-stained hands on the lapels of his frock coat.

But there is no doubting the enduring excitement of the set piece scenes that follow. The newly-born Creature – activated in this first instance, ironically, not by Frankenstein himself but by an 'act of God' in the Baron's absence – framed menacingly in the laboratory doorway. The unearthly hand movement that plucks the



sequences when first Justine and then Elizabeth decide to probe the secrets of Frankenstein's laboratory. In the first of these, and in a hideous irony, Frankenstein stumbles on an easy means of abortion when he delivers the troublesome and pregnant Justine into the hands of his artificial child. (And we're left horribly unsure of just what the Creature does to her.) The look of mingled relief and excitement on Frankenstein's face as he listens to Justine screaming is positively kinky and perhaps more

frightening than anything we see the Creature get up to.

Fisher's achievement in all this is

complemented by one of James Bernard's most ominous scores (which, according to Paul Dehn in one of the film's few favourable notices at the time of its release, "stirs up the very mud of apprehension") and by the remarkable power of his two leading players. Christopher Lee's Creature and Phil Leakey's make-up design have been consistently under-rated, even abused, by critics understandably bedazzled by the memory of Karloff and Jack Pierce. In fact, Lee's appearance is genuinely gruesome and his performance, as a kind of pitiful, brain-damaged child, is full of subtle and suggestive details.

Lee's appearance is genuinely gruesome and his performance, as a kind of pitiful, brain-damaged child, is full of subtle and suggestive details.

Peter Cushing's Baron is a fully dimensional portrait of obsessive pride and cold, cruel idealism – "Frankenstein as he would have been seen through the eyes of Baudelaire or Oscar Wilde" as David Pirie memorably put it – whose tragedy was to be further investigated over five subsequent films.

In no sense can *The Curse of*

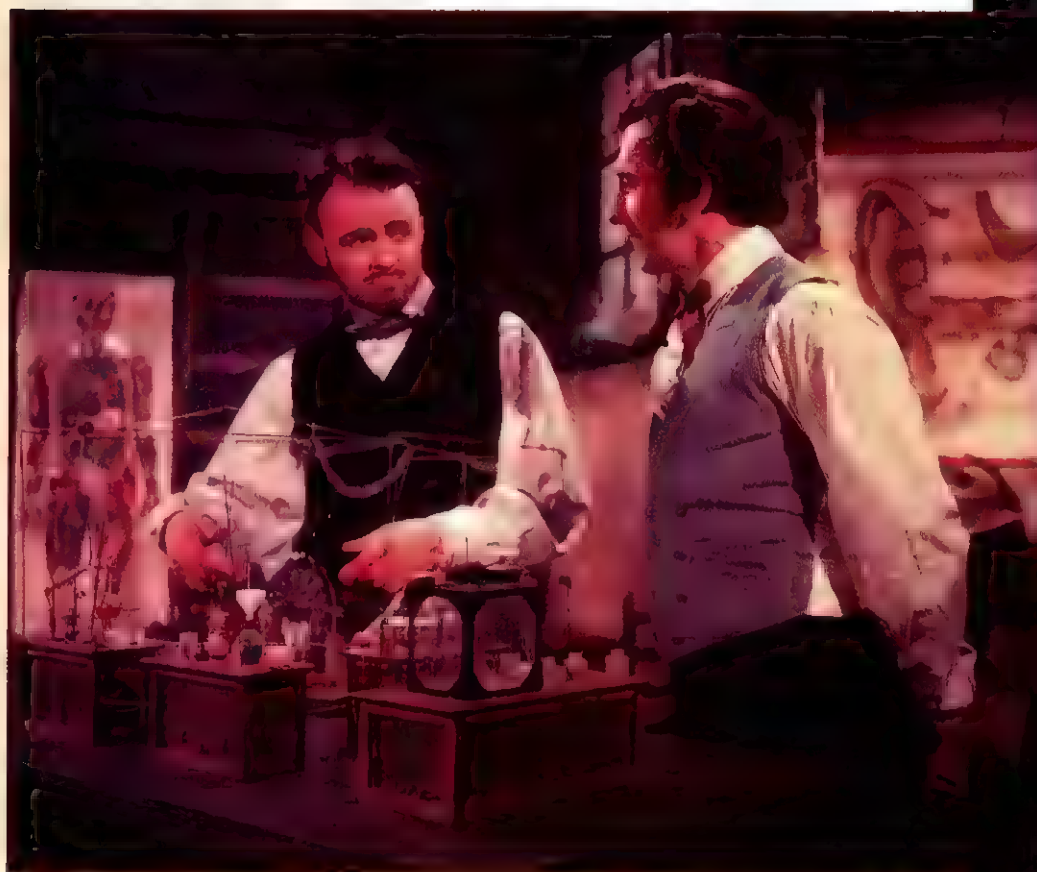
Frankenstein be called, as it so often has been down the decades, a 're-make' of James Whale's 1931 classic. It is a classic in its own right, which – thanks to the brilliantly intuitive efforts of Fisher, Cushing, Lee and the entire Hammer team – revitalised, re-defined and revolutionised horror films around the world.



bandage from its face, together with the uniquely disconcerting (and brilliantly executed) fast tracking shot that rattles in to allow us a good look at that face. (Any hack horror movie director, incidentally, would probably have settled for a clumsy zoom or an ugly shock cut at this point.) Later, the autumnal forest scenes with the blind man and his little grandson, the Creature emerging through tree branches, followed by the tragic futility of its puppet-like attempts at understanding. The Creature shambling pitifully towards the two scientists, the Baron charmed by its progress like a proud parent even as Paul raises his rifle to shoot it in the face. The brief, almost surreal, moment in which creator and creation are framed in the same shot, the Creature dangling pathetically from a hook in the ceiling as the Baron pulls on his gloves and chillingly intones, "I'll give you life again." All culminating in two classic suspense



Classic Scene



"We must build up our own Creature . . ."

The Curse of Frankenstein (1957)
Screenplay by Jimmy Sangster

After their success in reviving the corpse of a dead dog, Baron Victor Frankenstein (Peter Cushing) and his erstwhile tutor Paul Krempe (Robert Urquhart) discuss their future plans over drinks in the drawing-room of the Baron's house. Paul is eager to present a report of their discoveries to the forthcoming conference of the Medical Federation in Berne. The Baron, however, has other ideas . . .

FRANKENSTEIN: We must wait. What we've done up to now is nothing, nothing to what we will do. We've only just started . . . just opened the door. Look, now's the time to go through that door, and find what lies beyond it. Why, don't you see Paul? We have discovered the source of life itself, and we've used it to restore a creature that was dead. This is a tremendous discovery, but we mustn't share it yet. We must move on to the next stage. We've restored life where life was extinct. It's no longer sufficient to bring the dead back to life. We must create from the beginning. We must build up our own Creature, build it up from nothing.

PAUL: From what? Why, what in Earth are you talking about?

FRANKENSTEIN: Forget the whole. Now we must take the part. Limbs, organs . . . and then we must build.

PAUL: Build what?

FRANKENSTEIN: The most complex thing known to Man – Man himself. We must create a human being, a man with perfect physique, with the hands of an artist and the matured brain of a genius. We can do it, don't you see?

PAUL: No, I don't. Why, what you're saying is nonsense. A revolt against nature. Such a thing could only end in evil.

FRANKENSTEIN: Oh, come on Paul, what's the matter with you? You haven't shown any scruples up to now. And as for revolting against nature, well, haven't we done so already and succeeded? Isn't a thing that's dead supposed to be dead for all time? Yet we've brought it back to life. We hold in the palms of our hands such secrets that have never been dreamed of. Nature puts up her own barriers to confine the scope of Man. We've broken through those barriers. There's nothing to stop us now!



The Curse of Frankenstein

compiled by

Alan Barnes – *The Story, In Production, Casting, Making the Monster, Shooting, On Release, Comment and Classic Scene*

Jonathan Rigby – *The Characters and Critique*

Marcus Hearn – *Making the Monster and the trailer*



TWO MAJOR NEW TITLES FROM THE MAKERS OF DOCTOR WHO MAGAZINE

Blake's 7 Poster Magazine

The continuing stories of Blake's rebels, fighting the corrupt and malicious Federation.

Behind-the-scenes interviews and features.

Massive A-1 sized colour posters featuring previously unpublished photos of the cast and hardware.



Monthly from Marvel UK
£1.50

I wish to subscribe to the *Blake's 7 Poster Magazine*. I understand that my payment of £20.30 will entitle me to twelve issues - one year of the publication - starting from the next available issue.

Name

Address

Date of birth

Please tick your preferred payment method:

☐ I enclose a cheque/postal order for UK £20.30 made payable to Marvel Comics Ltd.

☐ Please charge UK £20.30 to my:

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard.

My card number is (13 or 16 digits):

Expiry Date.....

Signature.....

We regret that we can only extend this offer to UK subscribers.

Please include recipient's name and address if different from above.

☐ Tick here if you prefer not to receive details of any special offers or new products.

SC 0010C

Doctor Who Poster Magazine

Facts and trivia about the Doctor's greatest friends and foes.



Behind-the-scenes features.

Massive A-1 sized colour posters, many featuring previously unseen photos of the Doctor's companions and monsters.

Bi-monthly from
Marvel UK
£1.50

I wish to subscribe to the *Doctor Who Poster Magazine*. I understand that my payment of the appropriate charge will entitle me to twelve issues - two years of the publication - starting from the next available issue.

Name.....

Address.....

Date of birth.....

UK subscribers - please tick appropriate boxes:

☐ I enclose a cheque/postal order for UK £20.30 made payable to Marvel Comics Ltd.

☐ Please charge UK £20.30 to my:

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard.

My card number is (13 or 16 digits):

Overseas subscribers - please tick appropriate boxes:

☐ I enclose a cheque/postal order made payable to Marvel Comics Ltd.

Please charge my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

☐ £24.99 Europe surface mail.

☐ £31.60 Rest of world air mail.

My card number is (13 or 16 digits):

Expiry Date.....

Signature.....

Please include recipient's name and address if different from above.

☐ Tick here if you prefer not to receive details of any special offers or new products.

SC 0010C

Please send your orders to: MRM, P.O. Box 503, Leicester, England. LE94 0AD. Telephone hotline: 0858 410510



I WAS A TEENAGE FRANKENSTEIN

Think of Hammer's Frankensteins and the chances are you'll think of Peter Cushing. Or maybe Ralph Bates. The chances are that most won't recall the young **Melvyn Hayes**, who contributed a nonetheless memorable performance to *The Curse of Frankenstein*. **Alan Barnes** jogs the memory of Hammer's very first Baron.



"It was a lifetime ago," remembers Melvyn Hayes of his rôle as the young Victor in Hammer's *The Curse of Frankenstein*. Born on the 11th January 1935, he left his grammar school at the age of 15 and first tried his hand at being a jockey. He was working as a Fleet Street messenger-boy on two pounds and five shillings a week when he spotted a cryptically-worded advertisement in *The Daily Mirror* – "Boy wanted to disappear twice daily, or something" – and come Christmas 1951 found himself performing the Indian Rope Trick in Eric Mason's *Master of the Mysteries* show at the Comedy Theatre, London. "I had this thing about being on the stage," he says now. "It didn't occur to me that you could . . . I thought you had to have special training and all that sort of thing, so this was a way in."

He joined the famous troupe, Terry's Juveniles, played in a musical, *Dear Miss Phoebe*, and took the part of a dog in their pantomime before moving on into rep, earning £10 a week alongside later luminaries such as Edward Woodward, Frank Finlay and Margaret Tyzack: "They were fun days. You didn't stop working."

Later, he moved into television, was acclaimed for his performance in the drama-documentary *The Unloved*, played Skinner the sneak in *Billy Bunter*, and the Artful Dodger in *Oliver*

Twist: "It was all live, in those days everything was live." Then came the break into films, with "a tiny part - two lines" in 1954's *The Blue Peter*. "There was a part called Ginger, so I dyed my hair red. I was waiting to go into the room to see the director. Tony Newley came out with his script in his hand and said, 'I got the part!' 'What part you got?', I said. He said, 'Nobby!' I said, 'There isn't a Nobby,' and he said, 'No, it was called Ginger. They've changed it.' They said 'Next!' and I walked in feeling like an idiot . . ."

Considerably larger was his rôle as Young Victor in *The Curse of Frankenstein*. Melvyn believes he got the part " . . . because they wanted someone to look like Peter [Cushing], they had to have the same colour eyes. I got the script first of all, and there was another scene in it which was cut out, but if you actually listen to the commentary at the beginning of the film he [Victor] talks about his headmaster, his master . . . the scene was never shot, they did it as a voice-over, because by the time they got to me they were running out of money or something. They were cutting back because of overshooting. My part lasted about four days, and they cut that scene out where, basically, I stood up and had a thing with the headmaster, sort of discussing things way beyond what he would have been able to talk about as a child to a teacher . . . in the film, they sort of flowed over this bit. Although they never shot it, the man still had a credit, I believe."

Melvyn enjoyed working with his tutor, Robert Urquhart. "A nice man. When I came to do the scenes with him, I'd worked on the lines backwards. I was very young, and he was very experienced. He just opened the script and said, 'Shall we have a look at the lines, then?' I thought, 'I know them backwards . . . For me, that was the most important bit, but for him, it was just the next day's shooting . . .'" Hayes relished the chance to act with Peter Cushing, then one of the few big television stars: "I walked onto the set, and the first thing I saw was Peter holding up this eye. It was a big shot, through a magnifying glass, and he was looking at this eye. I thought, 'My God!' It was a sheep's eye . . . He was a wonderful man. The first thing he said to me when I came on the film was, 'I wear a ring in the picture, and I think it would be wonderful if you wore it in your scenes.' And that's how it went. I looked and watched him . . . He did a sort of Prince Charles hand behind the back thing, which I tried to adopt in the film. I went on to do about five pictures with Peter over the years."

Hayes's next film alongside Cushing was the following year's Liverpool-bound drama, *Violent Playground*. "He was playing a Roman Catholic priest. We were filming inside a church, and he came up to me and said, 'Melvyn, I didn't know what to do.' Of course, he was in his full garb and everything. He said, 'This woman came up to me and said, 'Will you pray with me, Father?' At first I was going to tell her I'm an actor, but then I thought, I daren't do that. So I went through the whole bit. So he pretended to be a priest. He blessed her and everything."

The Curse of Frankenstein was on release at the time and, during shooting on Merseyside, Melvyn struck a date with a girl he'd met

"There was an innocence about *The Curse of Frankenstein* when it opened in America."

in The Cavern, then a jazz club. "I said, 'Would you like me to take you to the pictures? There's a film showing this week - one of mine, *The Curse of Frankenstein*.' So I take her, and I pay all of three and six for the front of the dress circle. This is the centre of Liverpool, full of real hard nuts. I came up

on the screen - curly-haired, eighteen years old, and the entire audience shouted out, 'you poof!' This girl looked at me, and I was out the cinema in about three minutes."

"I don't think anybody realised it was going to be such a smash hit. In those days there was something exciting, frightening about it."

Now you see everything. Now you've got to see the heads cut off, you've got to see knives going in, and people being sick . . . it's a whole different thing these days, isn't it? There was an innocence about *The Curse of Frankenstein* when it opened in America - people who dressed as Frankenstein got in for nothing. They did a fantastic publicity thing. As a kid, we used to go and see the 'H' films, the Boris Karloffs and Bela Lugosis, and we thought they were really frightening."

"The only other horror film I did was *The Flesh and the Fiends* [the 1959 Burke & Hare picture, with Donald Pleasance and George Rose as the bodysnatchers. John Gilling directed]. I played Daft Jake, the Scots idiot. They got caught for murdering this Daft Jake character. Also, funnily enough, Peter [Cushing] was in that, playing Doctor Knox. I did some crazy ones with Peter. I remember my agent phoned me up once and said, 'Would you like to do a film in Lusaka, Zambia? Don't ask, don't read the script or you won't do it. But the money's good, and there's a safari thrown in.' I said, 'Who's in it?', and he said, 'Oliver Reed, Peter Cushing.' So I go out there on the aeroplane and on the way out some kid comes up to me and says, 'Hello. I play opposite you. My father's the producer.' I said, 'Who are you playing?' and he said 'Jan.' So I got my briefcase out from above me, flicked the script open, and my first line was [adopts camp Kenneth Williams inflection] 'Hello, I'm Eddie Tarzan. This is my friend, Jan.' I realised I was going to play the only effeminate Tarzan! The film never came out. It was unbelievable. I don't know what Peter was doing there."

Melvyn suffered a similarly cheek-reddening experience as a result of a chance encounter with one of his Hammer co-stars: "Years later, I went up to the bar in Pinewood, and there was Christopher Lee standing there with all his cronies, doing the big star bit, and I went up to him and said, 'Hello. I made you.' He said, 'I beg your pardon?' I said, 'I - I made you,' now very embarrassed, with people looking at me. He said, 'What are you talking about?' I said, 'Well, you were my monster. I made you. *Frankenstein*.' And I died. It was very embarrassing . . ."

Of course, Melvyn's been best known since for his comedy rôles from the early sixties Cliff Richard films through to *Carry On England* and became a household name as Private Gloria in the wartime sitcom *It Ain't Half Hot Mum*. Still working regularly, his Hammer legacy came back to haunt him after the recent BBC1 screening of *The Curse of Frankenstein*. "I had a 'phone call from a company saying, 'We want to do a cartoon film with animated models, like those *Creature Comfort* films. It's just a two-handed piece between an old man and a baby,' and I said, 'Oh yes?' And they said, 'We want you to play the old man,' and I said, 'What's the character?', and they said, 'It's Frankenstein.' I just made it a few weeks ago. I've come full circle. I've played the youngest Frankenstein in the world, and now the oldest!" †



Early Hammer



In the first part of an occasional series examining the early movies from the Hammer/Exclusive canon, **Jonathan Rigby** looks at *Four Sided Triangle*, the Terence Fisher film which pointed at things to come . . .

Lena/Helen	Barbara Payton
Dr Harvey	James Hayter
Bill Leggatt	Stephen Murray
Robin Grant	John Van Eyssen
Sir Walter	Percy Marmont
Young Bill	Glyn Dearman
Young Robin	Sean Barrett
Young Lena	Jennifer Dearman
Lord Grant	Kynaston Reeves
Solicitor	John Stuart
Lady Grant	Edith Saville
Screenplay	Paul Tabori and Terence Fisher
Music composed by	from the novel by William F. Temple
Music conducted by	Malcolm Arnold
Director of Photography	Muir Mathieson
Art Director	Reginald Wyer
Editor	J. Elder Willis
Make-Up	Maurice Rootes
Produced by	D. Bonnor-Morris
Directed by	Michael Carreras and Alexander Paal
	Terence Fisher
Distributed by Exclusive (GB), Astor (USA)	
Certificate 'A'	
Length 7,332 feet	
Duration 81 minutes	

The Story

Having studied at Cambridge, Bill Legatt and Robin Grant return to the village of Howdean where they concoct a 'reproducer' which can exactly duplicate any object. Helping them is their childhood friend Lena (back in Howdean after an American adolescence), and casting an avuncular eye over their process is Dr Harvey, the local GP. The apparatus is demonstrated in front of Robin's father, Sir Walter, and later his uncle, government minister Lord Grant. Lena and Robin get married and Bill, who loves Lena too, is distraught. Victim of an unhappy upbringing (unlike privileged Robin), he determines to find happiness by creating a Lena of his own. Dr Harvey is appalled by this plan, but it goes ahead nonetheless, once the machinery has been adapted to the reproduction of living tissue and

once Lena's consent has been guardedly given. The new Lena, whom Bill calls Helen, is so exact a duplicate that she too loves Robin rather than Bill. She becomes suicidal and Bill, in his most repulsive scheme yet, determines to eradicate her memory with electro-shock treatment. Lena assists in the operation, but barely has it been pronounced a success than a fire breaks out in the laboratory. Robin, who has known nothing of all this, succeeds in rescuing only one of the women, who turns out to be Lena. Bill and Helen are dead.

Background

Asked in 1975 if he felt Hammer horror had permanently 'sidetracked' his career, Terence Fisher replied "It didn't sidetrack my career at all. Up to that moment, my career had been attempting to find a line of direction which I was good at. *The Curse of Frankenstein* put my career into perspective."

Seen in retrospect, a few films in Fisher's pre-gothic filmography seem to give prior warning of the themes and images that were to become so central to this lucrative 'sidetrack'. Films like *So Long at the Fair*, *Stolen Face* and, perhaps most obviously, *Four Sided Triangle* [sometimes known in the US as *The Monster and the Woman*]. "I admit to having a certain weakness for that film" he later claimed.

This was one of two pictures [*Mantrap* was the other] co-written by Fisher and Paul Tabori and made by Hammer as co-productions, not with Robert L.ippert as was customary in the early 1950s, but with Alexander Paal. Indeed, his name appears prominently in the film's credits and Hammer's not at all. Eighteen years later he produced the starkly dissimilar *Countess Dracula*.

Recalling Hammer's first venture into science-fiction, co-producer Michael Carreras claimed that "There was a bit more excitement in



the preparation – my adrenalin level certainly went up higher than it had for the previous films. I began to see great potential in using special effects. I was dabbling in material I hadn't known before."

The film was budgeted at £25,000 and filmed over five weeks in August and September of 1952 – better than the twenty days Hammer usually allotted Terence Fisher at this time. The cheapness of the film is clear from the credit, 'Wedding Scene dressed by Youngs Dress Hire Ltd., London W1' – the outfitters presumably waiving their fee in return for on-screen publicity. Fisher was no doubt keenly aware of the financial pressure. Rain did not stop play during location work at Lulworth Cove in Weymouth, when Fisher surprised imported Hollywood starlet Barbara Payton by filming on, regardless of an unforeseen shower.

Hammer assembled a strong cast. 25-year old Payton ("seldom convincing" according to the *Monthly Film Bulletin*) was familiar to genre fans from Curt Siodmak's *Bride of the Gorilla* of the previous year, in which she found herself at the wrong end of Raymond Burr's simian impulses. Her casting was Hammer's standard, and at this stage still imperative, concession to the American market. She also appeared in *The Flanagan Boy* for Hammer but never fully bore out Carreras's "hot tip" that she would "become an international sex symbol star". She died in 1967. James Hayter, cast as Dr Harvey, was fresh from his triumphs as Friar Tuck and Mr Pickwick; fifteen years on he would reprise the former on Hammer's behalf in *A Challenge for Robin Hood* and then have the distinction of appearing in *The Horror of Frankenstein*. He would also, of course, become the voice of Mr Kipling's "exceedingly good cakes". An actor who, only a few months previously, had been playing King Lear at the Old Vic – and who, at forty, was only five years Hayter's junior – might seem a curious choice for the rôle of Dr Harvey's surrogate son, but Stephen Murray made a suitably haunted and unbalanced Bill nonetheless. ("Unadulterated ham", sneered the *MFB*.)

He was later to spend fifteen years at the helm of BBC Radio's *The Navy Lark*, but was already to radio what Peter Cushing was to television – more or less the most popular actor on it. Cast in the thankless rôle of Robin, and billed somewhat below the others, was John van Eyssen, a 27-year old South African actor who would later appear for Hammer in *Quatermass 2*, *Man with a Dog* and, of course, as a notable Jonathan Harker in *Dracula*. He subsequently became Chief Production Executive for Columbia Pictures in the UK and was also companion to Ingrid Bergman in her latter years.

A morbid note for trivia hounds . . . The two male stars of *Four Sided Triangle* died in the same week in the spring of 1983 – James Hayter on 27th March, Stephen Murray on 1st April – some thirty years after the film's release. This occurred in May 1953 [in both the UK and the US], and the film was better received by the public than by the press . . .

Variety – "Even the attempt to excuse the basic idea . . . with some scientific hocus-pocus is not saved by a somewhat stirring climax. Too many tedious passages and dearth of humour bog it down."

New York Times – "A pair of young scientists . . . have perfected a 'reproducer', a machine that literally can duplicate anything, including Barbara Payton. And that is not only the most delectable trick of the year, but just about the only attribute of this import . . . As one of the principals observes, 'It's a mess'."

A couple of months later, BBC television unleashed Nigel Kneale's *The Quatermass Experiment* on the sitting rooms of the nation, and Hammer were inspired to take a more visceral, 'X' certificate approach to science-fiction . . .

Critique

Having completed one romantic melodrama about a lovelorn scientist artificially reproducing his lost love (*Stolen Face*), Terence Fisher embarked on another, this time emphasising the science-fiction possibilities of the idea. Indeed, one of the chief fascinations of *Four Sided Triangle* lies in its broken-backed location of a wild and disturbing science-fiction idea in an almost comically incongruous British setting. Our two Cambridge-graduate Frankensteins are at work, not in some Transylvanian garret or high-tech American laboratory, but in a derelict barn (known to them as



Director Terence Fisher relaxes with Barbara Payton during production of *Four Sided Triangle*

'The Dump') in the sleepy home counties village of Howdean. Yet even in this cosy rural backwater, kindly Dr Harvey tells us "we have our share of men and women who turn their own lives into nightmares." This, and other dark hints, help to set up the charged atmosphere "from which fate fashioned the four sided triangle."

Malcolm Arnold's music is similarly schizoid, cloyingly twee for the pretty passages and effectively creepy (plenty of juddery strings and harps) for the laboratory sequences. These scenes remain much the best in the film, harking back to German classics like *Alraune* and especially *Metropolis* and pointing toward *The Fly* and, of course, Hammer's own series of gothic horror films.

It is intriguing to see Fisher's fledgling use of imagery that was to become a staple of his later output. Bill's eerily shadowed face, the bubbling retorts and alembics, black-gloved hands inserted into what looks like a fish tank, blood pulsing feverishly in the complex blood-exchange process, even a scene in which a guinea pig is given a nocturnal burial – all these details recur, one way or another, in the later *Frankenstein* films. The creation sequence,

in fact, is impressively staged (given the film's paucity of recourses) and, with its abundance of shadowy low-angled close-ups, plays rather like a low-rent parody of Universal's *The Bride of Frankenstein*.

Gratifyingly, only a token attempt is made to explain the outlandish duplication process. Barely has Bill embarked upon a basic account of 'matter' that Robin chips in with "Oh, just let's forget all the scientific jargon." Less gratifyingly, all the moral dilemmas presented by Robin and Bill's invention are similarly skirted over. Robin's aspirations to reproduce "works of art, to make beauty available to all" are countered by Sir Walter's fears that "atom bombs, poison gas, bacteria by the million" will get the treatment instead. But this strand is not pursued, while Lena's inward struggle regarding Bill's motivation (bristling with kinky possibilities) is barely even begun. After Helen's attempted suicide by drowning (foreshadowing Christina in *Frankenstein Created Woman*), all the spikier, more disturbing features of the plot are arbitrarily disposed of in a climactic conflagration. Like the fiery conclusion of his first film for Hammer, *The Last Page*, this provides another tantalising pointer to Fisher's later triumphs.

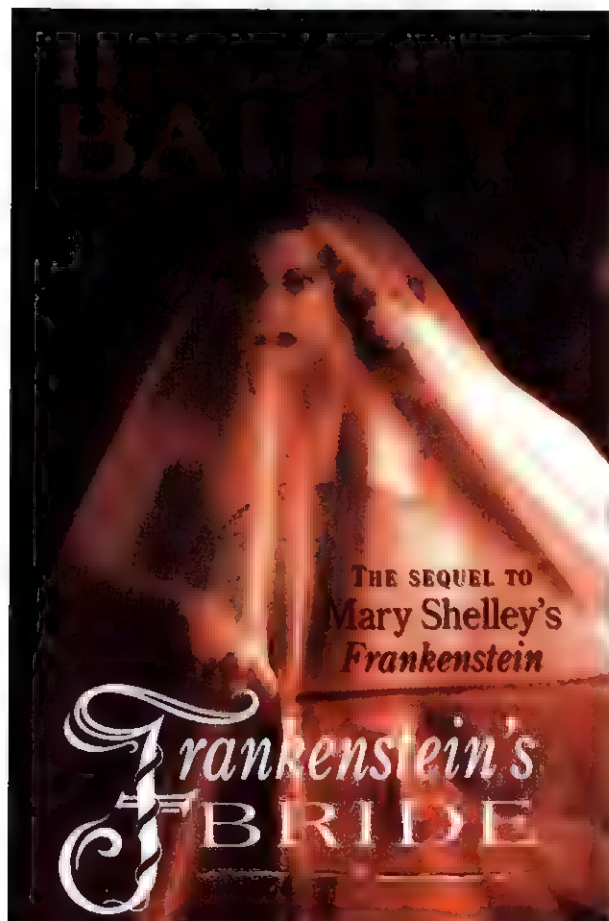
This eleventh hour blaze might seem, rather unsportingly, to cheat Bill of his chance of happiness with the re-programmed Helen. But it's clear from the beginning, when a title card quotes Ecclesiastes ("God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions") that what Fisher has in mind is a quasi-religious cautionary tale. We're reminded of this at the end too, when a quote from Emerson tells us sternly "You shall have joy or you shall have power, said God. You shall not have both." Perhaps then – with his childish and decidedly dodgy attitude towards his peers (emulating them in all things) and women (determined at all costs to control them) – Bill Leggatt "must be destroyed."

Though hardly "the most amazing and unusual film ever made" – an early example of Hammer hyperbole – *Four Sided Triangle* remains modestly effective and certainly rewards examination. †

Blood Lines

The latest Gothic and gory literature reviewed by Alan Barnes.

↑↑↑↑↑ prime rump ↑↑↑↑ sirloin ↑↑↑ fillet
↑↑ minute steak ↑ dog's meat



FRANKENSTEIN'S BRIDE

Hilary Bailey

ISBN 0 671 71917 3, Simon & Schuster, £12.99 hardback

Billed somewhat misleadingly as the sequel to Mary Shelley's novel, here is a speculative 'what-if?' piece, taking as its premise that Victor Frankenstein did not destroy his Creature's would-be bride in Chapter 20. The story is narrated by one Jonathan Goodall, a London acquaintance of the thoroughly respectable Victor and Elizabeth Frankenstein, now in middle-age; and it's to the author's credit that Goodall's persistently evocative narration and story mirrors that of the driven, obsessive lead created by Shelley. The plot is refreshingly direct and to-the-point, flagging only when Bailey introduces a credulity-defying coincidence in the middle chapters. But she doesn't merely retread the original's footsteps; indeed, the larger part is taken by the author's own characters. Hammer fans might well be slightly disappointed by Bailey's Victor, whose part is rarely proactive, merely suffering the consequences of his actions as a young man; all his fire and ambition has vanished, replaced by penitence and sorrow. The Creatures are suitably tormented, and their eventual fate is realised by somewhat heavy-handed but effective imagery. Clever, suspenseful and more than a little chilling.

Rating: ↑↑↑↑↑



THE JOURNAL OF A GHOSTHUNTER

Simon Marsden

ISBN 0 316 90989 0, Little Brown, £16.99 hardback

Marsden's a photographer by trade, and this is an atmospheric coffee table volume illustrating his journey across Europe documenting ruined, haunted sites associated with the supernatural. The images alone are astonishing, mostly shot on infrared film which gives an ethereal, otherworldly, graven touch to his subjects. From The Burren in County Clare, home to the servant-hanging Naire Rua, to Vlad Tepes's Romanian island grave, he captures the awe-ful essence of bricks and mortar with elan and grace. The accompanying text is uneven – the British stories, in particular, have a touch of the *Hello!* style about them; "Lord and Lady Muck invite you inside their fashionable pied a terror to meet their family ghost" – and some is



real fifth-form "clanking chains" purple prose, but much of the time it offsets the illustrations more than adequately. The closing chapter, recording Vlad Tepes's Transylvania, is especially ghastly, but most grotesque is the story of 'The Naked Knight', a cursed, unembalmed, 300-year-old corpse that hasn't fully decomposed as yet – remains to be seen, perhaps? Minor quibbles: 'Castle Frankenstein' is a bit of a cheat, and why no visit to the Hungarian homes of Erzsébet Bathory, 'Countess Dracula' herself? Nevertheless, Marsden's book is classy, gruesome, Gothic stuff.

Rating: T T T

READING THE VAMPIRE

Ken Gelder

ISBN 0 415 08013 4, Routledge, £11.99 paperback

Not for anyone without letters after their name, this is a heavy-going cultural and literary study of vampire texts, from



Polidori, Le Fanu and Stoker to Rice, Aldiss and King, stopping off along the way to consider the vampire in film, as Jewish caricature, as closet gay, as AIDS metaphor and so on. It's well-trodden ground, of course; Gelder's analyses are sound enough but he doesn't add anything substantially new. The book falls down on its lack of a central argument or thesis; Gelder fires off observations willy-nilly, but fails to develop them in the form of a clear and cogent continuum of ideas. One minute Bram Stoker as anti-Semite, the next Christopher Lee as extratextual icon. It's all rather frustrating; a Vampire Studies primer rather than a prime source in its own right. Sadly, the exhaustive bibliography is perhaps the most useful thing here.

Rating: T T

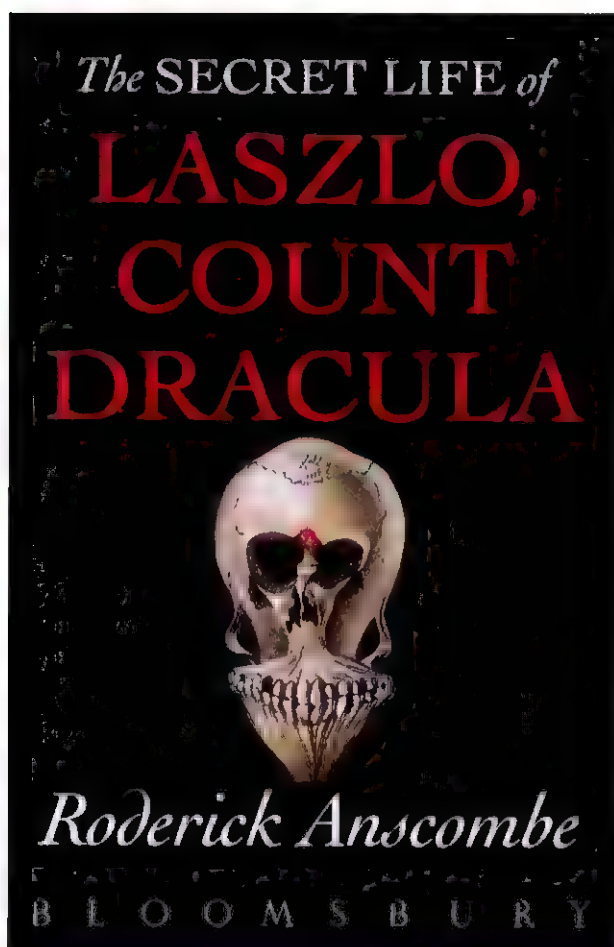
THE SECRET LIFE OF LASZLO, COUNT DRACULA

Roderick Anscombe

ISBN 0 7475 17797, Bloomsbury, £14. 99 hardback

A remarkable debut novel for emigre psychiatrist Anscombe, whose rewriting of the Dracula myth has a clear *raison d'être*; not only does he work with the American criminally insane – "the really, really mad" – his medical background has led him to question the practicalities of vampirism; just how would one go about drinking blood from the carotid artery? Budding vampires please note – approach from the rear (too much sinew up front) be prepared to chew and tear, then ready yourself for the fountain of gore which may very well hit the ceiling! Anscombe has jettisoned as much as he has offered new. No supernatural elements here; no crosses, no garlic, no sleeping in coffins. He presents the Count as a genuinely tragic character, easily manipulated in the early stages and increasingly out-of-control in the latter two-thirds, emphasised further by the narrative's diary-entry device. The deep characterisation of his surprisingly few victims aids this. The Machiavellian Lothar von Pick is a truly loathsome creation, an anti-Van Helsing perhaps; sadly underused in the middle sections, he's almost worthy of a novel in his own right. Less successful is the political subplot concerning the Magyar League, subversives planning to overthrow the Austro-Hungarian empire, who never fully manage to convince. However, the final act of this tragedy is compellingly drawn and sickeningly executed. A black mark, however, for the few silly anachronisms; conversations dated April 1888 mention 'Jack the Ripper' for example – a full six months prior to the coining of the term. And if nineteenth century businessmen ever referred to companies going "bust" – well, I'll don a cape, sharpen me teeth, and go out hunting young virgins by moonlight...

Rating: T T T T



Fanzines

Most of the following should be available through specialist science fiction/horror bookshops, or send a stamped addressed envelope/international reply coupon to the relevant address for further details. Fanzines intended for review should be sent to the editorial address.

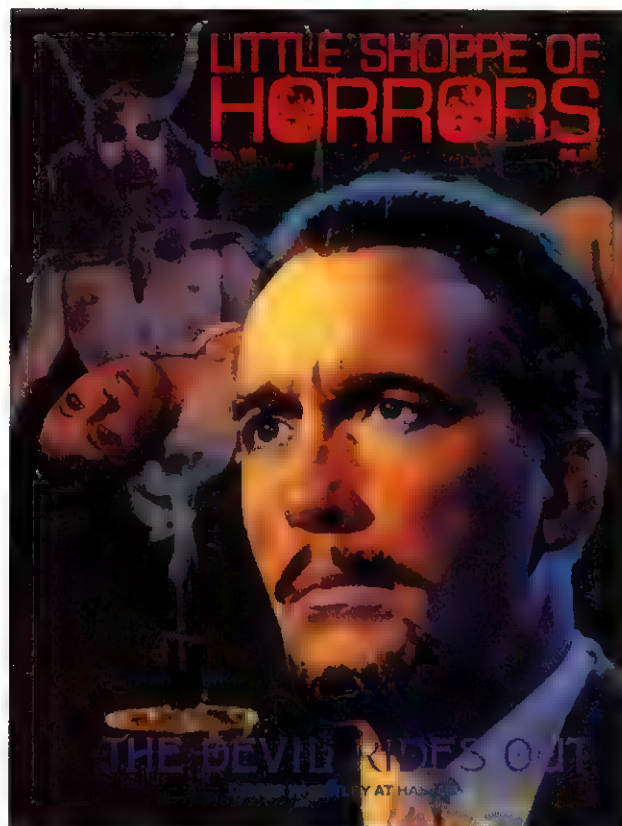


LITTLE SHOPPE OF HORRORS # 12

A4. 130pp Richard Klemensen, PO Box 3107, Des Moines, Iowa 50316, USA.

This most recent edition of the world leader in Hammer fanzines has been out for quite a while now, but it deserves a mention for the sake of horror ingenues. A treasure trove of interviews and impeccably-researched features; the material on the Dennis Wheatley films is especially good. It has its weaknesses – some cliquy name-checking, an irritating habit of printing the same quotes in both main features and interviews, and the boorish, leery tone of 'Horrors of the Black Nylon Museum' – but I'd be failing in my duty as a Hammer scholar to give this frankly essential magazine anything other than the highest possible recommendation.

Rating: ★★★★★



SAMHAIN

A4. 40pp. John Gullidge, 77 Exeter Road, Topsham, Exeter, Devon EX3 0LX.

"Britain's longest running horror film magazine". Bi-monthly with impressive production values and a generally high standard of journalism, occasional Hammer coverage in this broad-based news and review magazine. Excellent – if sometimes obscure – selection of interviewees. Its wide editorial remit, however, can make for a rather bland, neither-fish-nor-flesh read.

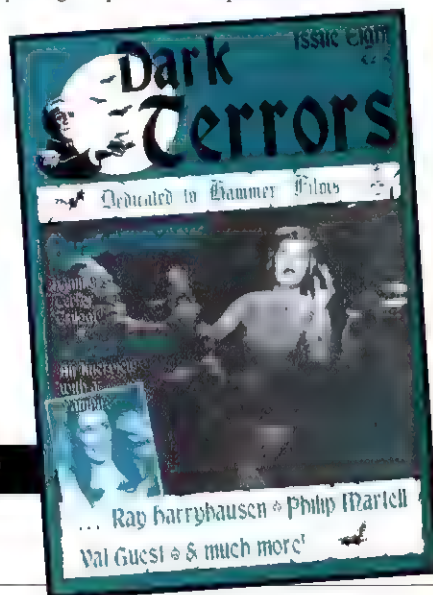
Rating: ★★★

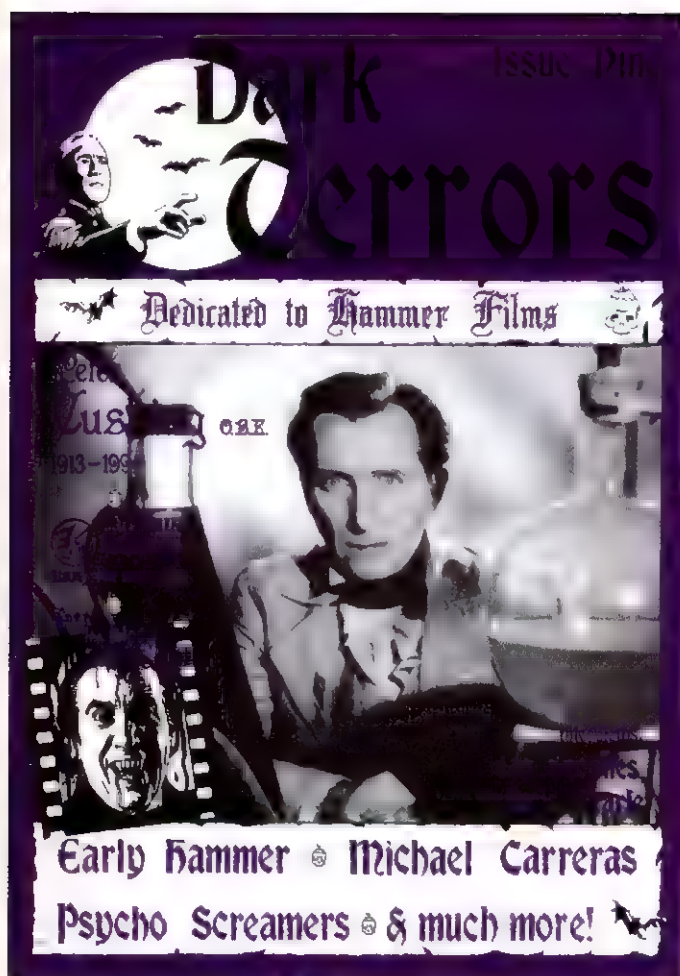
DARK TERRORS # 9

A4. 48pp. Mike Murphy, "Avalon", Ventnor Terrace, St Ives, Cornwall TR26 1DY.

Fairly regular glossy dedicated to Hammer. A veritable feast of trivia which occasionally verges upon cut-and-pasteism; splendid news pages, however, and the commentary is usually fair-minded and intelligent. Mike ought sometimes to be a little harsher and more selective with his material; perhaps a slightly more humorous approach might help. Good solid fare nevertheless, with A1 coverage of Hammer's 'Exclusive Films' days.

Rating: ★★★



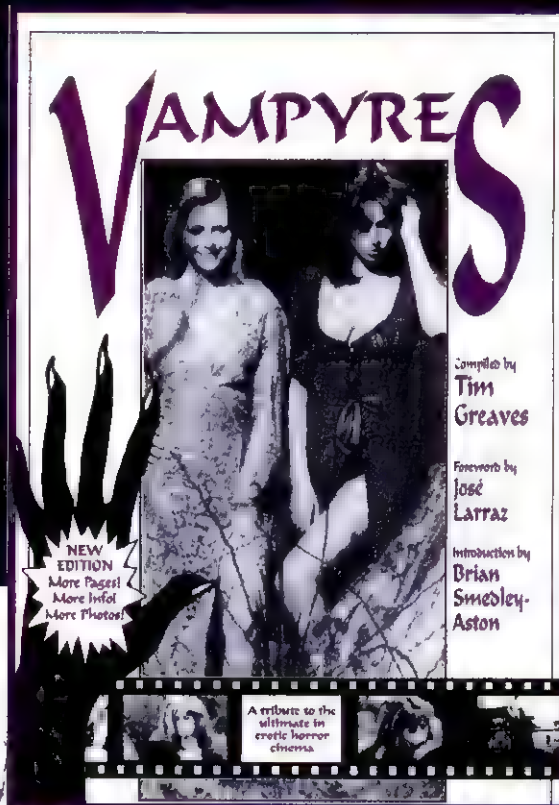


VAMPYRES (Revised second edition)

A5. 68pp. Tim Greaves, 1-Shot Publications, 118 High Street, Eastleigh, Hants SO50 5LR.

The latest of Tim Greaves's superb one-off booklets probing the lives and times of famous-for-fifteen-minutes horror babes. Here he turns his attention to the 1974 British bisexual bloodsucker flick, *Vampyres*. Tremendously well-researched 'making of' pages complemented by smashing design and rare photographs – the explicit nature of which makes this adults-only material. Terrific, and nowhere near as salacious as it might have been in lesser hands. Go find!

Rating: ↑↑↑↑↑





In For a Hound

Robert Urquhart, Peter Cushing's co-star in *The Curse of Frankenstein*, talks to **Alan Barnes** about his sometimes difficult relationship with Hammer.

"There was a great gap between being a boy in the West Highlands and suddenly being a West End actor. But the gap was never apparent as far as I was concerned, and I don't suppose it is when you're young. You don't perceive the enormity of it."

So says Robert Urquhart, known to Hammer enthusiasts for

his portrayal of the heroic Paul in *The Curse of Frankenstein*. It was never a certainty that Robert would carve out a niche in the dramatic arts; born in 1922, he went to sea at the age of 16, serving during the war. "I was wounded quite early on, in 1941, and I came ashore . . ."

Robert first trod the boards at The Park Theatre in Glasgow. "Quite an intriguing place," he recalls. "It was a little amateur theatre that had a great deal going for it. There were a lot of

people like Duncan MacRae and Gordon Jackson there at the time. In fact I met Gordon by chance, and it was he who invited me to go along there. I think I played a very eccentric old man. The only reason I got the job is that I was so nervous. It was alright to shake as an old man!

"Acting you learn by osmosis . . . you learn by being around. I feel very sorry for the kids – there's not much chance to learn nowadays. There's not much chance for them to work with old actors, not for any length of time. It's just a job for ten minutes, and then you're out of work again."

Training at RADA, Robert soon found himself much in demand

on the stage, a demand that remains undiminished. "I did two seasons at Stratford, a season at the Old Vic, and another at the National." It was in 1951 that his talents first attracted the attention of the British film industry. He can recall his first day in studio for his debut picture, *You're Only Young Twice*: "There was a very good Irish actor named Eddie Byrne [later seen in Hammer's *The Mummy*]. I got put into a dressing-room and Eddie was there. I felt it was necessary for me to say something, so I said 'Well, this is my first time on a film set,' and he said [adopts Irish accent], 'You've not missed nothin'.' So I suppose that would apply, I'd not missed nothin'."

Two years later, he was cast in the Hollywood-funded Arthurian epic *Knights of the Round Table*, shot in Borehamwood. "That was great fun. It was a great experience working for the Americans . . . it was the American film factory." As the valiant Sir Gawaine, Robert spent much of the movie clanking around in armour and wielding a broadsword; not much of a challenge for the indefatigable thesp. "I'd been at the RADA, and had a scholarship there. You used to be trained in fencing and things like that. What one did learn a great deal of on that film was the riding. It was a film with quite a long schedule and MGM bought a lot of horses, quite good quality hunters. I lived in Elstree at that time, and it was very easy for me to ride out in the mornings. The actors' doubles were all steeplechase jocks, so one got tremendously good experience of learning to ride." Being such a major production, Robert was afforded the opportunity to work alongside big-league stars such as Mel Ferrer and the legendary Ava Gardner as Guinevere. "I worked with Ava again in *55 Days In Peking*, several years later. A great lady. No doubt about it. Something very special about Ava. Everybody knows she had a drink problem, but there was a touch of the lady about her. I know she wasn't from any kind of great aristocratic family, but she had a great dignity herself."

Did he enjoy being a bit of a matinee idol himself? "It sounds like I'm a bit jaundiced about it all, but it's all a bit hysterical, all of that nonsense. I think that's what I liked about Ava . . . she had a kind of serenity."

More film rôles soon followed. Late in 1956, Robert found himself being offered the part of the 'good guy', Paul Krempel, in Hammer's *The Curse of Frankenstein*. "I think by that time I was

"I'm still very ambivalent about the horror pictures, I really don't think they're the brightest sort of message to be doing."

under contract to Associated British. There were a number of actors under contract to British companies. You got a standard salary from them, and they rented you out and split the profits. Hammer really did set up an organisation for making horror pictures. Fortunately or unfortunately, I only did the one film with them. I can laugh at it now. I'm still very ambivalent about the horror pictures, I really don't think they're the brightest sort of message to be doing. After the picture opened, it was an enormous success, and I remember doing an interview with a gentleman like yourself and saying, quite frankly, that I was ashamed to have had anything to do with it . . . I still think that it's the prurient nature of them that attracts a lot of the audience, and the salaciousness, and the sheer criminality. I suppose you've got to call it bestiality, a bit more than criminal.

I remember being horrified by seeing a series of interviews, I think it was on television, of people who had been to see the film, and they were being interviewed outside the Warner in Leicester Square. They were saying, 'Oh, we loved it. We love all that blood!' For a second or two, I took it very, very seriously, and in this interview I said that there were some things they shouldn't have done, and I remember getting a letter from Michael Carreras saying, 'This type of publicity could hurt my company enormously' . . . and I never worked for them again. They were a closed book to me. I was never forgiven."

Despite his later reservations, Robert enjoyed making the film a great deal, and got on well with his co-star, Peter Cushing. "A marvellous actor, Peter. I can say that without fear of favour. He was a very nice period actor, very good in plays like *The Rivals*, the restoration comedy." But, of course, Cushing relished the opportunity to play horror. "I think he had a certain gruesome side to him," remarks Robert, drily.

And there's another reason why he thinks of the film with a degree of affection: "Do you remember the little puppy, one of

"I was horrified when I saw what it did, how an audience took it . . . or could take it."

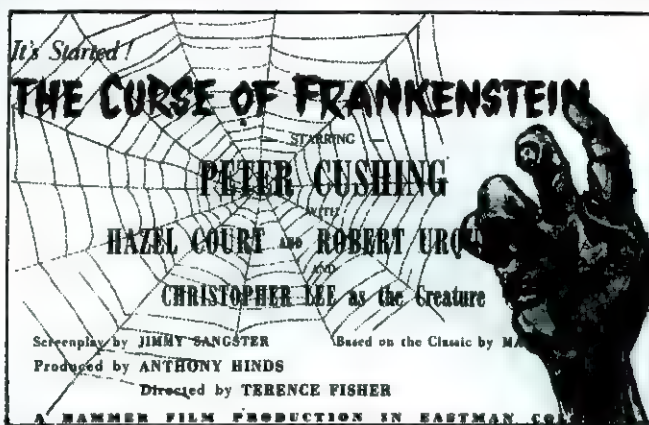
the first experiments? Well, I had that for the rest of its life. We have, I think, had three or four generations from Frankie. I remember seeing Hazel [Court] years afterwards, and we were talking about the picture, and I said that the film had been on the telly, and she said, 'Oh yes' and I said, 'What on Earth did you watch that for?' Of course, she watched it for her daughter [Sally Walsh, the young Elizabeth]. She said, 'Why did you watch it anyway?' And I said, 'For the dog!' That was

the only reason I ever watched it! In fact, I watched it this year ['94] and got great pleasure from seeing the dog. And great pleasure from seeing Peter, too.

"I must say, I think it's quite well made. It's very competent. And given that it had a sensational element to it when it first came out, I'm not surprised it was such a success. I liked the whole experience, it was all good fun, but I was horrified when I saw what it did, how an audience took it. . . or could take it. I know that 99 per cent of people won't be affected in the slightest, but I feel there's a kind of moral responsibility to ensure not one person is. But I'm not preaching, you know . . ."

Robert has worked consistently in the decades since, in television series such as *The Pathfinders* and *The Amazing Mr Goodall*, films such as *Testimony* and *The Dogs of War*. "I've always had the impression that I've always kept working. I have a trade, but possibly not a career. Although, I must say that the two best things I've done in my life – possibly the most critically acclaimed – have been the last two tellys." In the Screen Two film, *The Long Roads*, Robert played alongside Edith MacArthur as Peter and Kitty, an elderly couple embarking on an odyssey across – literally – the length of the British Isles. Amongst many favourable notices, Robert was singled out for his "impeccable performance" by *The Guardian*. "That was about two years ago . . . another thing that I enjoyed doing enormously was a Ruth Rendell, *Master of the Moor*, with a young director who I think is fantastic, Mark Evans. There's a name that you will hear. That's a tip for the top!"

Robert's delighted to hear of Hammer's current plans to make *Vlad the Impaler*. "You can put me up for a part in that. It's time I was brought back!"



GHOSTS

Sometimes **FACT** is more frightening than **FICTION**

Do Ghosts exist?

This question has
fascinated mankind
for centuries.

Dare you uncover the
astonishing evidence
for yourself?

Starring
Christopher Lee



A CD-ROM for Multimedia PC & Macintosh
for ages 12 to adult

Marcus Hearn explores Hobbs Manor and discovers a familiar face...

The line between software and cinema is blurring. The relatively new field of CD-ROM (compact disc multimedia) has thrown up interactive versions of everything from the American Academic Encyclopedia (all 38 volumes on one disc) to *The Lover's Guide*. Perhaps the most intriguing development of recent years has, however, been the so-called 'interactive movie'. Notable examples include *Wing Commander 3: The Heart of the Tiger*, a game with a development budget of \$4m and a six-week Hollywood shoot. The actors playing second-fiddle to the computer-generated sets included Mark Hamill, Malcolm McDowell and Tim Curry. *Under a Killing Moon*, another title which appeared in time for Christmas '94, comes on no less than four compact discs and boasts Margot Kidder amongst a cast that you can direct into situations of your own influence. In this country the actors' union, Equity, has been quick to recognise the enormous potential this new medium offers and has introduced a new set of rates appropriate to appearances in such productions.

Late last year an actor instantly recognisable to horror enthusiasts made his CD-ROM debut in a disc that truly defies categorisation. *Ghosts*, an interactive documentary/drama from Media Design Interactive, is hosted by Christopher Lee. The actor adopts the identity of the sinister Dr Marcus Grimalkin to occupy a lower quarter of your computer screen. As you wander around the impressively generated 'Hobbs Manor', climbing stairs, opening doors and examining objects on your way, Grimalkin pops up to offer you clues about seemingly inaccessible areas or objects. Lee's sonorous tones also narrate some stomach-turningly gruesome historical accounts

when you are successful enough to locate hidden objects or rooms on your quest for the truth about the supernatural. Particularly memorable illustrated stories include the grisly fate that befell a kitchen maid who poisoned her master after her disgust at his sexual meanderings. If, however, burial alive isn't strong enough for you then there's the chap who insisted his lover always joined him for dinner - even if it meant the cutlery had to be manoeuvred in her rotting corpse's hands by obedient servants.

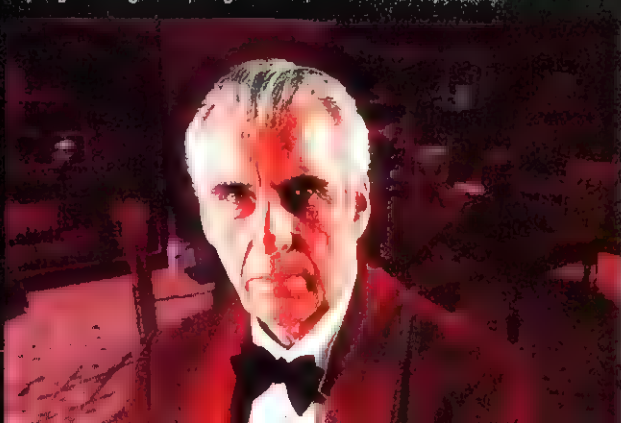
While accounts of such legends and their resulting hauntings are fascinating, Lee can only do so much with his limited screen image and digitised voice to elevate these segments above the status of static slide shows. *Ghosts* only reaches its full potential as true multimedia as your investigation brings you into contact with real-life experts, sceptics and eye-witnesses. Those interviewed on camera include Tony Cornell, whose thirty years experience in paranormal study have benefited his development of S.P.I.D.E.R. (Spontaneous Psycho-physical Incident Data Electronic Recorder), a device which accompanies him to the haunted locations he visits. Also present in Grimalkin's scattered witness boxes are Dr Susan Blackmore, one of the first people to be awarded a doctorate in parapsychology and Father John Nuttall, a Roman Catholic priest who discusses the help he's offered to spectrally-hampered parishioners. Perhaps the most intriguing expert, however, is Robin Furman, the psychologist who founded Ghostbusters UK in 1984. Robin's flashgun-style ghostbusting contraption has to be seen to be believed.

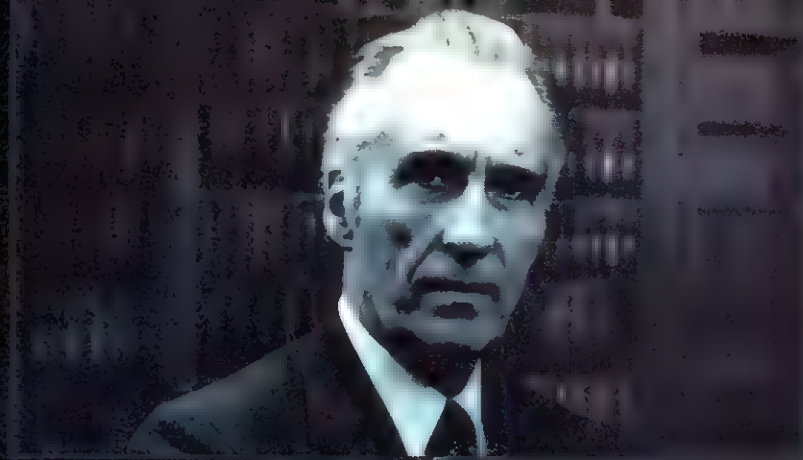
The other results of MDI's requests for information in the pages of *Fortean Times* are astonishing sound recordings, footage, and pictures supposedly illustrating poltergeist activity in a way that no reference book could even approach. The dramatic framework that Hobbs Manor and Grimalkin bind the examples together with reward the curious user with a reference more easily accessible than any video tape.

The project is, however, not without its flaws. A documentary-style reference tool wrapped in a game-style format has met with perhaps understandable confusion in the computer press ('*Ghosts? Schizophrenia* would be a better title - this CD-ROM is suffering from a serious identity crisis,' attacked *PC Format* in December.) While the impressive research undertaken is presented in a pleasingly scientific manner - no conclusions are drawn over the existence of ghosts, the evidence and opinions on both sides are merely presented objectively - the game's 3D house-roving sequences leave something to be desired. While the house itself is attractively rendered, your passage throughout it is hampered by less-than-smooth motion sequences which are unfortunate in the light of well-established games such as *Alone in the Dark* and *Myst* which adeptly feature similar concepts to better effect.

So, if you can get your head round the fact you're 'playing' a 'game' with no plot, no score and the principal motivation of getting the chance to view 90 minutes of video, 1,500 images and listen to over an hour of audio then *Ghosts* is a uniquely satisfying disc. And in a CD-ROM industry currently swamped with hollow promises that's no mean feat.

Christopher Lee who, as Dr Marcus Grimalkin,
is your guide through a computer-generated exploration into the supernatural.





"Christopher Lee was the obvious choice," claims art director Dave Hornsby.

"Christopher Lee was the obvious choice for the project," says art director Dave Hornsby. "When we were preparing *Ghosts* we considered a number of other actors, including Richard O'Brien, but because our market lies 90 per cent in the States we decided that we really needed someone internationally renowned. Plus, of course, Chris has this fantastic voice which was perfect for the stories we needed to tell."

Despite being a relatively new concept, Lee was apparently familiar with CD-ROM. "Surprisingly enough, yes," Dave continues. "He'd previously recorded a pilot for another CD-ROM about the history of comics. He knew the score, so when he came in for his one day's filming everything went very smoothly indeed. Obviously, he's been doing this sort of thing for a lot longer than we have!"

Dave is quick to defend the curious nature of a disc which seems neither full-blown documentary or game. "That was entirely deliberate – we wanted to try something different and felt that the supernatural would be the ideal subject matter to explore. There are, however, areas where we were able to indulge ourselves creatively – the house, Hobbs Manor, was completely out of our imaginations. We didn't base it on an existing location, but began by loosely storyboarding the various angles as if we were making a film."

"We used it once in a deserted church," explains Robin Furman, describing his ghostbusting device. "We fired the beam of light into a swirling green ominous mist which exploded into trillions of glistening lights that rushed out of the door and disappeared."

Some of the experts and sceptics whose testimonies elevate *Ghosts* into true multimedia. Of special interest is Robin Furman (bottom right) seen here displaying his incredible ghostbusting device.



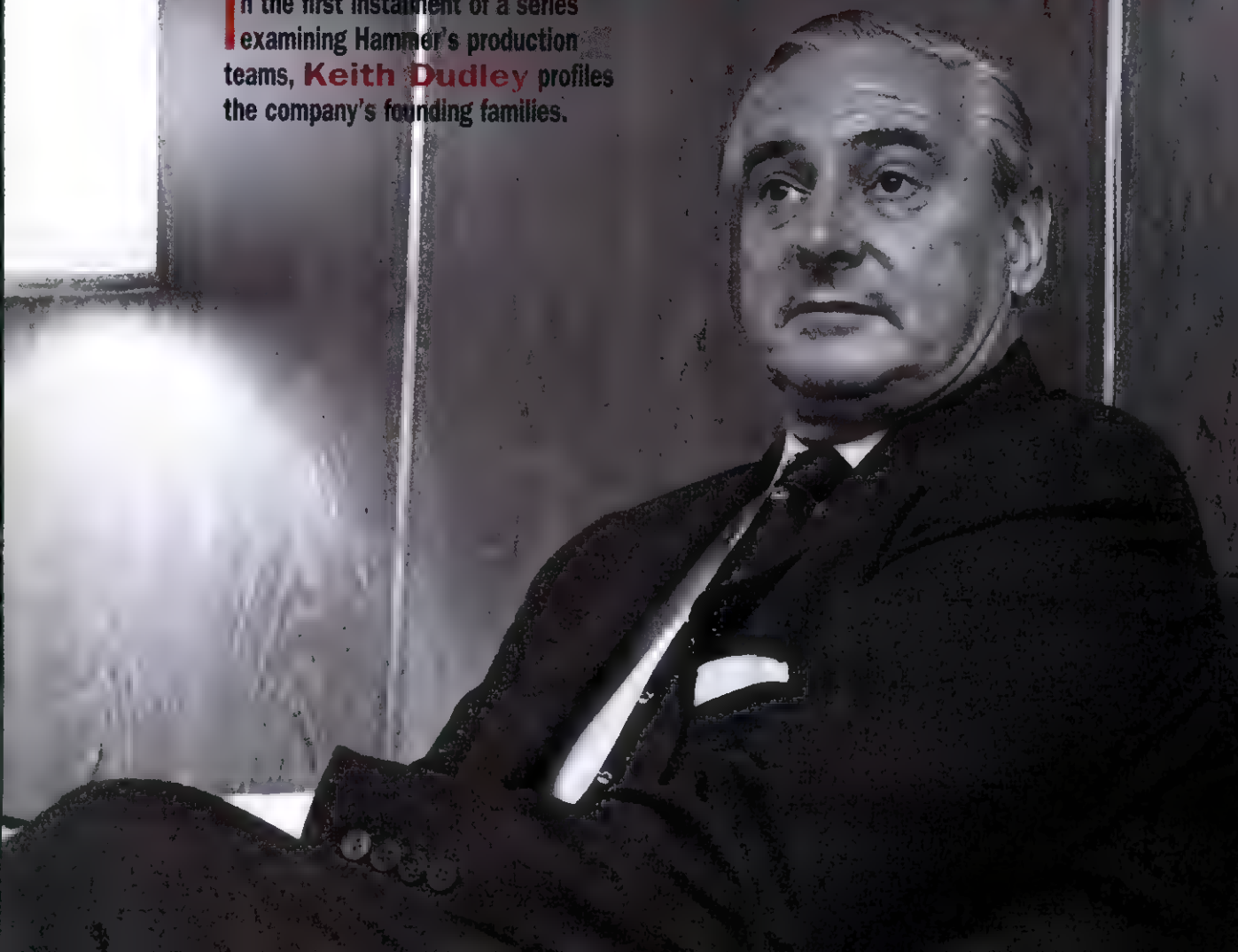
Hobbs Manor – the most haunted house in the world?





Who Were

In the first instalment of a series examining Hammer's production teams, **Keith Dudley** profiles the company's founding families.



207 King Street, Hammersmith was the address of Blue Halls Ltd., Enriqu  Carreras's first venture into show-business. Born in Spain, Enriqu  Carreras came to England around 1900, bringing with him a flair for business. Unfortunately, many of his early ventures were unsuccessful but his luck changed when he purchased his first theatre in 1913, formed Blue Halls Ltd and went on to build up a chain of theatres in London and the south east of England.

In 1923 the company expanded when Enriqu  purchased his first cinema, 'The Coliseum' in Harrow. It wasn't long before the company had a chain of cinemas running alongside the



William (Hammer) Hinds, pictured in the early fifties.

Gradually taking a back seat in the company Enriqu  Carreras and William Hinds, although still company directors, handed over the day-to-day running of Hammer to their sons, James Carreras and Tony Hinds.

SIR JAMES CARRERAS

"Without Jimmy Carreras there would have been no Hammer in my opinion. He was pre-eminent amongst many equals. He was, quite simply, a showman. A very great showman, an entrepreneur. He knew what to give the public, he knew how to present it to them and how to market it. He knew exactly what kind of film they wanted to see and he gave it to them."

— Christopher Lee

The principal driving force behind Hammer was, to give him his full title, Lieutenant-Colonel Sir James Carreras KCVO, MBE – a showman, an entrepreneur, and a man well-respected throughout the British film industry.

James was born in 1909, the only son of Enriqu  Carreras, and educated at Stonehurst public school. He married in 1926 and joined his father at Exclusive Films in 1935. At the outbreak of war in 1939 James entered the armed services. In 1944 he was awarded the MBE and was demobbed in 1945 with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

With his return to civilian life James rejoined the family firm and found himself running the company. After a period of relative inactivity Carreras decided that the time was right to go into actual film production rather than just distribute other companies' material.

Acting on the advice of Jack Goodlatte, the booking manager for the ABC cinema chain, and working with William Hinds, his father's partner, James formed Hammer Films in 1947 and

Hammer?

theatres. It was about this time that Carreras formed Exclusive Films as a distribution outlet for re-release features for his own chain of cinemas.

In 1935 Enriqu  met, and formed a firm friendship with, William Hinds – jeweller, bicycle salesman and ex-vaudeville artiste turned film producer with his own production company called Hammer Films, a name derived from Hinds's stage name 'Will Hammer'. Between 1935 and 1937 Hammer Films produced five features: *The Public Life of Henry the Ninth*, *The Mystery of the Mary Celeste* which starred Bela Lugosi, *The Song of Freedom*, a big-budget production starring Paul Robeson, *Sporting Love* and *The Bank Messenger Mystery*.

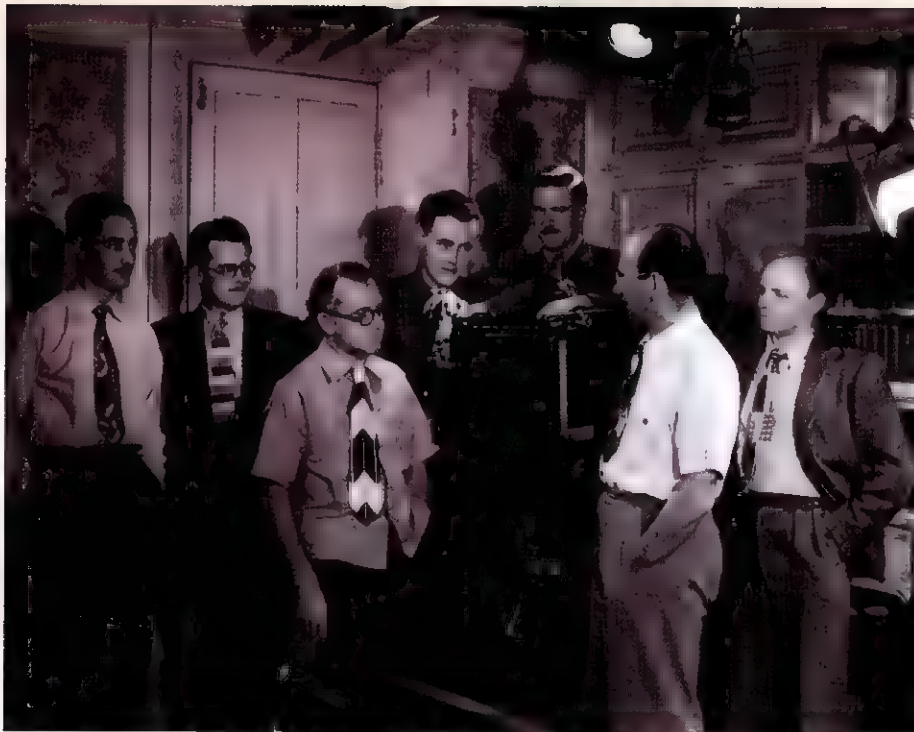
As well as producing for his own company, Hinds became a partner in Exclusive Films and, with Carreras, purchased the re-release rights to a number of British Lion productions, thus ensuring a healthy profit and long-standing business relationship.

Sadly, William Hinds's own production company was not so successful. A massive slump in the British film industry forced Hammer Films into liquidation in 1937. Exclusive, however, continued to distribute films during the war years, including re-issues of the Hammer output.

In 1947 Enriqu  Carreras and William Hinds decided to reform the old Hammer company as a production arm of Exclusive. This meant that Exclusive no longer had to pay for distribution rights, thus ensuring even greater profits. Now known as Hammer Productions Ltd., the company made four films in quick succession including the first *Dick Barton* feature. Hammer Productions Ltd. were finally registered as a production company in 1948 with its company directors named as William Hinds, Enriqu  Carreras, James Carreras and Anthony Hinds. The first 'official' Hammer film released in that year was a 46-minute feature called *River Patrol*.



Peter Cushing, Veronica Carlson and James Carreras during a break from filming *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* in January 1969.



From left to right: Michael Carreras, Tony Hinds, director Frank Searle, Jimmy Sangster, Peter Bryan (who would later script Hammer classics such as *The Brides of Dracula* and *The Plague of the Zombies*), a reporter from *The Cinema* and Cedric Williams at work on *The Man in Black* at Bray, 1949.

MICHAEL CARRERAS

Born in 1928, Michael Carreras joined the family firm that was Exclusive Films in 1943. As the 'office junior' he took on a variety of jobs including sales, publicity, booking and accounts. He also found himself an 'official dog-walker' for the company secretary's pet poodle! Posting off publicity stills and posters to the various cinemas showing Exclusive's latest releases never really interested the young Carreras, who instead wanted to pursue his love of big band and jazz music. He once claimed "I took the opportunity of a grandfather who could offer me a job merely to pass the time between those years". In 1946 Michael was called up for national service and served in the Grenadier Guards until 1948. On demob from the army he re-joined the family firm as sales and distribution assistant. Unhappy with this arrangement, and certainly not happy with the job, Michael

produced *Death in High Heels*, the first in a long line of movies. Produced in association with Marylebone Films, *Death in High Heels* was directed by Tommy Tomlinson and produced by Henry Halsted. It starred Don Stannard, who was to become the screen's first Dick Barton in a series of films also produced by Hammer. The initial film was a success for James Carreras, Hammer and Exclusive who were distributing the production output. Hammer were on the way. It would take time, but success was just around the corner thanks to the skill and showmanship of James Carreras.

Cedric Williams, lighting cameraman on many of the early productions, recalled just one of the gimmicks that James was fond of employing: "James Carreras was a brilliant salesman, and I remember quite distinctly that on the *Dick Barton* film cans that went out to the cinemas there was a special notice in red ink."

It read:

**"To the chief projectionist,
Dear Chief,
When it comes to the critical moment at the end of the film, make sure you use full amplification, blast them out of their seats, this is the sort of effect we want".**

Although never taking an active part in Hammer's production output, James continued as the driving force behind the company, selling his later films and ideas to American financiers on a title alone. In 1970 he was awarded a knighthood for his work with various charities. Two years later he retired as managing director of Hammer, handing control of the company over to his son Michael. Although officially retired he continued raising finance for Hammer's output as he did for the various charities he worked for. He worked tirelessly for the Variety Club of Great Britain, The Trustee Council of Cinema and Television Benevolent Fund. Sir James was also the chairman of the Cinema Veterans from 1982 to 1983. He died in 1990, aged 81.

made it known in no uncertain terms that he would prefer working in production. He was then assigned to Tony Hinds, son of Hammer founder Will Hammer, to learn all he could about film production. He eventually became an executive producer.

In 1951, at the age of 23, Michael Carreras produced his first film for Hammer, *The Dark Light*, a thriller directed by Vernon



Michael Carreras (on the right, pointing) at work on *Never Look Back* in 1951.

Sewell and starring Martin Benson. He went on to produce a number of the company's early productions, alternating with Anthony Hinds, before turning director in 1955 on a 30-minute musical featurette entitled *Cyril Stapleton and the Show Band*. It was a way of incorporating his love of music with his job as a film-maker.

Carreras went on to produce and direct another five musical 'featurettes' in colour and 'scope between 1955 and 1957. After cutting his directorial teeth on these and other 'shorts' Carreras

was finally given his chance to direct a full feature film for the company, a Second World War story called *The Steel Bayonet*. Although not in the same league as the later Val Guest war film, *Yesterday's Enemy*, it proved a strong debut.

In the run up to 1957 and his first feature as director Carreras also turned his talents to scriptwriting with *The Stranger Came Home*, produced in 1954. He also acted as casting director on much of the company's output.

1957 saw Hammer change direction. They had scored a worldwide hit with the colour *The Curse of Frankenstein* and both James Carreras and Tony Hinds saw their future in horror and fantasy subjects. Michael Carreras, on the other hand, didn't share their enthusiasm for the genre so, in 1961, after the runaway success of the early Gothic horrors, he left Hammer to form his own production company. Under the banner Capricorn Films Carreras produced three pictures, including the first ever British western *The Savage Guns*. Filmed in Almeria, Spain, long before Sergio Leone 'discovered' the area, the production starred Don Taylor and Richard Basehart. Capricorn Films also produced a number of movies for Hammer, including *She* and *One Million Years BC*. Carreras also returned to his father's company from time to time as an independent producer working on and producing various titles. As Henry Younger, his pseudonym, he wrote two more scripts for Hammer, *The Curse of the Mummy's Tomb*, released in 1964, and *Slave Girls of the White Rhino*, released in 1968 after a delay as simply *Slave Girls*. In 1971 Capricorn Films ceased trading and Michael Carreras, on the invitation of his father, rejoined Hammer as managing director. He continued writing and directing features for the company having already helmed *The Steel Bayonet*, *Visa to Canton*, and *Maniac* earlier in his career. He continued writing and producing but took a back seat on direction, bringing in new and younger directors to the company.

Occasionally he was called upon to take over a film at the last minute. In 1968 he directed *The Lost Continent* when the original director, Leslie Norman, bowed out through ill health. In 1971 he took over the disaster-laden production of *Blood From the Mummy's Tomb* when original director, Seth Holt, died during shooting.

In 1972, on the retirement of Sir James Carreras, Michael purchased the company and immediately set about making changes. Michael, as already stated, never loved the low-budget horror movies that Hammer were noted for and once in total control he attempted to take the company into more lavish territory, an idea that never really saw fruition. His ideas on such productions as *Vlad the Impaler*, *Nessie*, and new-style horror such as *Victim of his Imagination*, a story based on the life of Bram Stoker, were interesting, but the state of the British film industry at that time meant that finance was becoming more and more difficult to secure. Instead of producing his bigger budgeted productions Carreras found himself at the head of a company producing horror movies on an even smaller scale than before.

In spite of all the setbacks he persisted in trying to set up more prestigious productions. In 1978, in association with Rank Films, Hammer produced *The Lady Vanishes*, a remake of the Alfred Hitchcock classic. Shot at Pinewood Studios and on location in Austria, the production was beset with problems from day one. The original star, George Segal, walked out, to be replaced by Elliott Gould, leading the American financiers to pull out. This left Carreras and Rank to foot the bill. More problems caused the production to run way over budget. As entertaining as it was, *The Lady Vanishes* was a financial disaster both for the companies involved and for Carreras personally. Hammer were declared bankrupt, and the company was taken away from him.

Michael Carreras tried many other ventures after his departure from Hammer, including a movie waxworks museum in the

cellars of the London Palladium, a museum that included animatronic computer-assisted moving exhibits from the Hammer classics. Characters such as Dracula, Frankenstein, the Mummy and Carmilla were all represented in marvellous and atmospheric moving tableaux. But the most striking of all was Leon the werewolf from *The Curse of the Werewolf*, shaking the bars of his cell while Michael Ripper cowered in the background. Other ventures included a holiday tour company taking in Hammer location tours and 'Dracula tours' of Romania.

Michael Carreras died on 19th April 1994 at the age of 66.

ANTHONY HINDS

"Of all those who I have encountered in the film industry, be it Hollywood, Great Britain, or the continent, for all those qualities that a true leader and guide needs, I unhesitatingly and warmly nominate Anthony Hinds. For my part, I am a prouder and happier man for having had the privilege of working for him."

— Peter Cushing



Tony Hinds, producer of the series of successful Exclusive films at Riverside Studios and at Bray, left for Hollywood on Christmas Eve. Managing director Jimmy Carreras with Michael Carreras who recently produced "Never Look Back," at the Manchester Studios, are seen here wishing him good luck. While in America Mr. Hinds will discuss future production plans with American distributors, including the Robert L. Lippert Organisation. Before Tony left for America, Carreras was able to tell him that plans have been completed for the circuit releases of "Whispering Smith Hits London" and "The Last Page," following upon the release at the beginning of this month of "Cloudburst." Mr. Hinds took with him a copy of the recently completed "Wings of Danger," starring Zachary Scott.

Will Hammer gave the company his name, James Carreras gave it his sales and showmanship skills and Michael Carreras kept it going through the lean years. But one man stood out above all these. Without Tony Hinds, Hammer would not have survived beyond 1954. They certainly wouldn't have gone on to produce the horror and fantasy films now synonymous with their name.

Hinds was the only member of the family-based firm with a strong enthusiasm for the horror genre. He was also an exceptional film producer with the ability to handle even the most difficult American actors who were imported to star in the early Hammer productions.

Anthony Hinds was born in Ruislip in 1922 and educated at St. Pauls public school where, it is said, he enjoyed reading the works of D.H. Lawrence in preference to the more vigorous pastimes of the sports field. On completing his education in 1939 he joined his father, William (Hammer) Hinds and his



JIM CARRERAS

EXCITING NEW BRITISH FILMS for 1957
 FROM
HAMMER FILM PRODUCTIONS
 BRAY STUDIOS

IN RELEASE

X THE UNKNOWN

DEAN JAGGER · EDWARD CHAPMAN · LEO McKERN

COMPLETED

QUATERMASS II

BRIAN DONLEVY · JOHN LONGDON · SIDNEY JAMES

LEO GENN

THE STEEL BAYONET

KIERON MOORE · MICHAEL MEDWIN

IN PRODUCTION

PETER CUSHING

**THE CURSE OF
FRANKENSTEIN**

HAZEL COURT · ROBERT URQUHART · CHRISTOPHER LEE

IN PREPARATION

**THE ABOMINABLE
SNOWMAN**

FORREST TUCKER · PETER CUSHING

THE PHOENIX

**THE CAMP ON
BLOOD ISLAND**



TONY HINDS

partner, Enrique Carreras, as a booking clerk in the 'family business' of Exclusive Films. Called up for national service in 1940 he joined the RAF for the duration of the war, rejoining the company after much persuasion and arm-bending by James Carreras in 1946.

"I wanted to be a writer, not a producer and not necessarily in films at all," he once said. "I started as a general 'dog's body' and worked my way up, eventually realising my ambition by writing scripts."

Tony Hinds became a producer quite by accident when the original producer

of one of the early 'quota quickies' decided to quit mid-way through production. Hinds stepped in, or was thrown in, to finish the picture and found himself to be the company's new on-line producer. From that first production Hinds went on to oversee fifty films for the company.

Hinds was also given the responsibility of finding low-cost studio accommodation after the company found that studio costs were too high for their budgets. He hit upon the idea of renting an unfurnished country mansion house at Cookham Dean near Maidenhead. Collecting together a unit of top-class film technicians Hinds set about turning this empty house into Hammer's first workable studio.

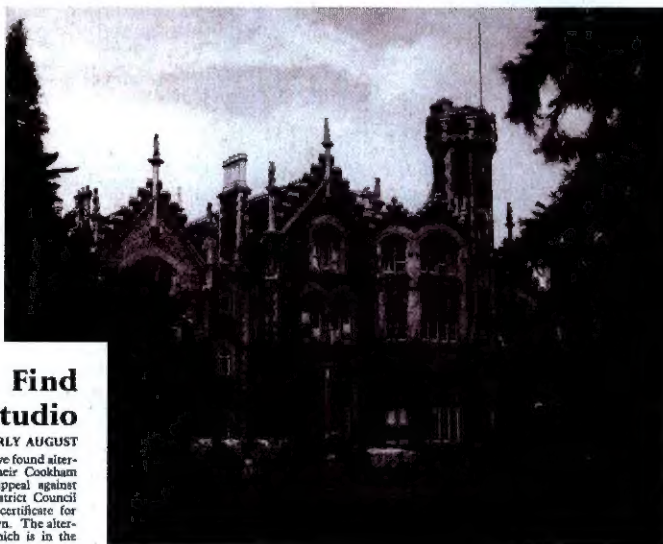
Four films were produced at Cookham, but it proved impossible to stay [see press clipping] and besides, Hinds needed somewhere larger. Two other country houses were tried with eight more films produced before moving back to Elstree Studios to complete production on two more features. However, the restrictive confines of a major working studio were ill-suited to Hammer's way of working and Hinds found himself once more on the lookout for a property that would suit their sense of independence. He found what he was looking for in Oakley Court on the banks of the River Thames just outside Windsor. The country house was eventually developed as 'Bray Studios'.

Throughout the early years of producing the majority of Hammer's output, Tony Hinds continued perfecting his scriptwriting abilities. By 1960 he had completed his first screenplay, a treatment based on Guy Endore's novel, *The Werewolf of Paris*. Following the success of *The Curse of the Werewolf*, as the problematic film was ultimately titled, Hinds scaled down his work on production and concentrated instead on writing the scripts for the majority of Hammer's horror classics under the pseudonym John Elder (a name he borrowed from Jim Elder Wills, a colleague of his father's from the Exclusive days).

Hinds retired from Hammer as an executive 1969, aged 46, to take up "the life of a country gentleman." Although retired he

continued writing scripts for Hammer and for Kevin Francis's Tyburn Productions, notably *The Ghoul* (1974), *Legend of the Werewolf* (1975) and *The Masks of Death* (1984). His last work to date for Hammer was *A Visitor From the Grave*, an episode for the *Hammer House of Horror* television series in 1980.

"I thought I was a pretty lousy producer," Hinds modestly suggests. "As I see it, a producer's job is to encourage the crew, keep the actors happy, and keep out of the way. I did none of those things." †



Oakley Court in Bray, Windsor. The house would become home to most of Hammer's classic Gothic productions throughout the fifties and sixties.

**Exclusive Find
Another Studio**

PRODUCTION START EARLY AUGUST
 EXCLUSIVE FILMS have found alternative accommodation to their Cookham Dean studio should their appeal against the refusal of the Rural District Council to grant a change of user certificate for "Dial Close" be turned down. The alternative studio is at Bray, which is in the same locality.

It was stated yesterday that Exclusive are still hopeful of being permitted to stay at "Dial Close," in which case they may continue to employ both houses for production on an interchange basis.

In the meantime, they anticipate finishing production of "Moet the Rev" (now retitled "Meet Simon Cherry (The Rev.)") at Cookham Dean this week and, after a two-weeks' summer holiday for the unit followed by two weeks of preparation on their next subject, "The Man In Black," recommencing at Bray on August 8.

Next month, *Who Were Hammer?* examines the careers of the Hammer producers, including Anthony Nelson Keys, Jimmy Sangster and Roy Skeggs.

NEXT MONTH IN HammeR Horror

DRACULA PRINCE OF DARKNESS

IN STUDIO
ON LOCATION

ON WIDESCREEN VIDEO

MICHELE BURKE
BEHIND THE SCENES ON
INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE

BARBARA SHELLEY
CAT GIRL



HAMMER
COLLECTABLES UP FOR
GRABS IN A MAJOR
COMPETITION

ON SALE 9th MARCH



DRACULA PRINCE OF DARKNESS

Starring
CHRISTOPHER LEE · BARBARA SHELLEY · ANDREW KEIR

Also Starring
FRANCIS MATTHEWS · SUZAN FARMER · CHARLES TINGWELL · THORLEY WALTERS

WALTER BROWN · PHILIP LATHAM · Screenplay by JOHN SAWSON · From an idea by JOHN ELDON · Based on characters by BOAM STOKER · Directed by TERENCE FISHER
Produced by ANTHONY NELSON KEYS · TECHNICOLOR® · TECHNISCOPE® · Released Through WARNER PATHÉ

INTERVIEWS WITH
DRACULA PRINCE OF
DARKNESS'S
FRANCIS
MATTHEWS AND
MICHAEL REED



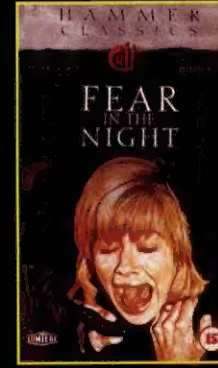
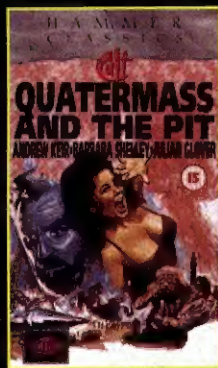
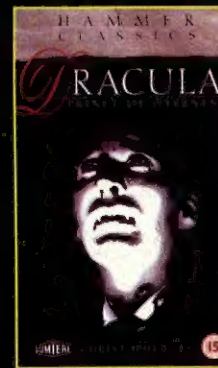
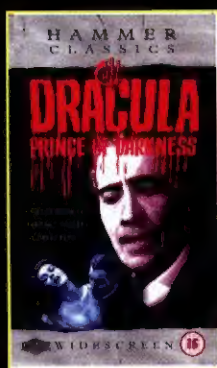
Associated British Pathé Ltd. presents A Hammer Film Production
"DRACULA-PRINCE OF DARKNESS"
1971
CHRISTOPHER LEE
BARBARA SHELLEY ANDREW KEIR
TECHNICOLOR® IN
RELEASED THROUGH WARNER PATHÉ DISTRIBUTORS LTD

SPECIAL OFFER



A unique opportunity to buy classic British horror films at a special discount.

Lumiere Video and Marvel have teamed up to offer you these great titles at a specially reduced price of only £8.99* each (normally £10.99) and a special boxed set of four films for only £29.99. In addition, on orders of 5 titles or more we will pay all postage and packing.



Please add £1.00 Postage & packing for the first video cassette and 70p for each further cassette

Post to: **Angloace Ltd., LUM O6, PO Box 2LL, London W1A 2LL.**

Cheques/Postal Orders made payable to: **ANGLOACE Ltd.**
Credit cards: Access ☐ Visa ☐

Surname:.....

Forename:.....Address:.....

Card no.

Expiry date:

Postcode:.....Tel:.....

Date:..... signed:.....

Title	Price each	Qty	Total Price	Title	Price each	Qty	Total Price
The Beast Must Die	£8.99			The Mummy's Shroud	£10.99		
Blood of Fu Manchu/ Castle	£8.99			Quatermass and the Pit	£8.99		
Blood From the Mummy's Tomb	£8.99			The Reptile	£8.99		
Dracula Prince of Darkness	£8.99			She	£8.99		
Dracula Prince of Darkness (Wide screen)	£12.99			Hammer Box Set	£29.99		
Fear in the Night	£8.99						
The Horror of Frankenstein	£8.99						

CREDIT CARD HOTLINE 0171 491 8534 Total: £ P+P

*This offer does not apply to the widescreen Dracula Prince of Darkness and The Mummy's Shroud